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THE SPHERE, DECEMBER 11, 1943
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THE SPHERE

Vol. CLXXV No. 2290 WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED THE GRAPHIC DEC. 11 1943

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Volume CLXXV No. 2290 The SPHERE, London, December 11, 1943

THE SPHERE
With which is incorporated "THE GRAPHIC"
The Empire's Illustrated Weekly

THE THREE-POWER CONFERENCE IN NORTH AFRICA: MADAME CHIANG KAI-SHEK, WITH MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL DURING THE RECENT TALKS, which Madame Chiang attended throughout, despite the delicate state of her health

For the first time in this war, Mr. Winston Churchill and President Roosevelt have met Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek at an historic full-dress conference at the Mena House Hotel, near Cairo. The result was the announcement that plans have now been completed for the crushing of Japan and the taking back of all the territories she has ever acquired by violence and greed. Madame Chiang, wife of the Generalissimo, was present during the big talks : she was ill with eye trouble when she set out on the flight from Chungking, but her presence was important. She acted as interpreter for the Generalissimo, attended all the discussions of the Big Three and, in fact, became one of the principals. Usually, the First Lady of China wore a long black Chinese dress, with purple flowers, white shoes, a high-necked mandarin coat, jade ear-rings and a straw hat : in this picture she is seen with the British Prime Minister during an interval in the talks. Other pictures of the historic meeting are given on pp. 323, 334-335 of this issue

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A WAR NEWSLETTER —No. 223

1, NEW OXFORD STREET, W.C.1.

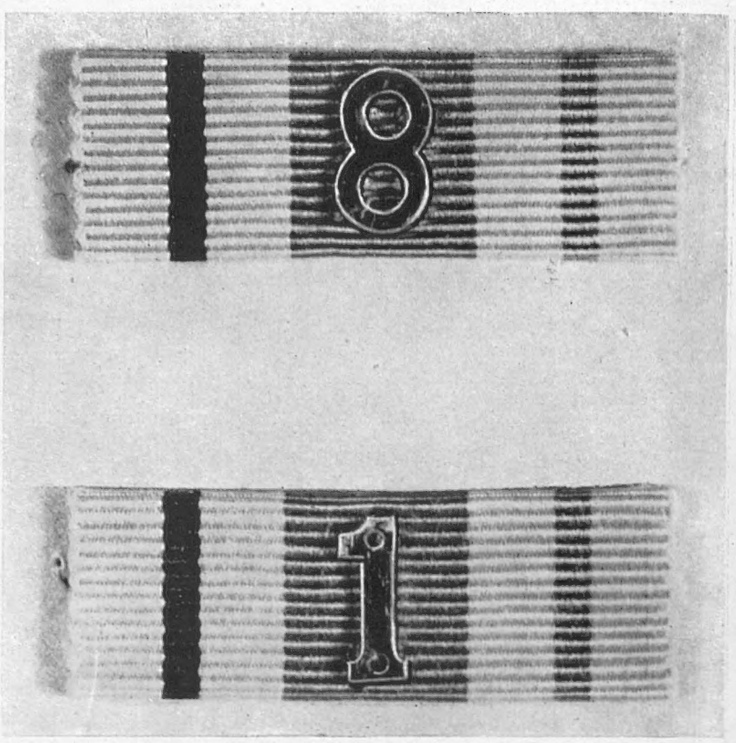
Peripatetic.—However meticulous and vexatious be the security measures taken to safeguard the meetings of Allied war leaders, the cat always leaps from the bag (and sets rumour flying) when Mr. Attlee replies in the Commons to matters of importance. Then the public knows at once that our "Merry Monarch," Winston, is on his travels again with his family. During the latest expedition of the magic carpet, matters of considerable importance were debated. Had the Premier been at home he would unquestionably have "intervened" in the debate on Leros and on the "ballot direction" to the mines, and I fancy he would have said something trenchant before the Mosley amendment division. But he had other fish to fry—Chinese carp, and, as we now know, Volga sturgeon. While he was settling Japan's hash, our own domestic hash was denied the stimulus and seasoning of Mr. Churchill's pepper. The world's his oyster, and this oyster has outgrown its old label, native. This, exceptionally, is recognised as a World War, and Mr. Churchill was one of the first to discover the fact. Most of us are still wrapped in the delusion that it is being fought in our own backyards.

Socialism's Political Handicaps.—The House of Commons "half-redeemed the fame" of this country in the smashing defeat of the Mosley Amendment. But the slur remains. It and the Hereford case (and other incidents also in a drab November—as drab and dingy as any I recall) confirm my opinion that we, in Britain, are still very muddy- and muddle-minded in our conception of the meaning of "democracy," and that quite a clamant and powerful section is satisfied with a definition of "mob-rule." In many ways, the Socialist Party is the best-knit, the best organised and the most energetic and realistic of the political parties. It has many advantages over the older parties, but it has one dangerous joint in its harness—suspicion within its ranks. Time and again, in the history of the party's rise to political importance, this deadly joint has gaped. No sooner does a Socialist rise to the top, no sooner does he achieve political office, but suspicion of his motives or jealousy from the ranks fasten on his career and activities. "He will be seduced by the fleshpots, he will be attracted to Toryism, Capitalism, snobbery or luxury; he will fall a victim to the narcotic of tradition and warm his hands before the fire which in his younger days he was pledged to rake out. He will 'walk with Kings and lose his virtue.'" When people declare "the working man is at heart a Conservative," they often mean in truth something altogether different. We imply that, despite the apparent handicaps and weaknesses of Conservatism to-day as a political ideology, Conservatism is by no means down and out. It has slipped in and won back time and again through that joint in the harness of Socialism. And it will continue to do so until the rank and file of Socialism learn to think for themselves, to reject slogans, to recognise the motives of paid agitators, and to gain and practise a form of self-discipline which will enable them to trust their elected leaders and to see beyond their own backyards.

How to Wriggle Out?—The evidence crowds in that the German people have now no illusions about the possibility of victory, that they have had enough of war and would be thankful to get out if they could. The evidence is derived from many sources. That which comes from returned P.O.W.s is perhaps the most reliable, in the view of the man-in-the-street. If these returned P.O.W.s spoke only to their guards in Germany, the evidence might be regarded as bearing only on a single type or section of German opinion. But many returned prisoners, in the stages to repatriation, have exchanged ideas with all sorts and conditions, and their evidence is taken from a cross-section of all Germans. It gives an interestingly unanimous view of the arguments and considerations which occupy the anxious, muddled minds of Germans to-day. In these considerations of escape from intolerable affliction, the overthrow of Hitler is not regarded as the chief obstacle. The overthrow of Hitler they regard as neither unthinkable nor impossibly difficult. Surrender to the Democracies would be comparatively popular and easy of accomplishment after the condition precedent of Hitler's overthrow. Nor is the nature of the Government which must take the place of the existing regime—hard nut as that may appear to us—the prime difficulty. Russia is the prime consideration. The German people are quite ready to gamble on the "humanity" of Britain and America in their hour of submission. They are not prepared to gamble on a sudden softening of Russia's determination to exact the fullest penalty for the atrocities committed against the Soviet Union. The Democracies might be expected to remit the loose change; the Soviets will exact the last farthing. So, in crudely-coloured block letters, the argument may be set forth. Goebbels has succeeded in establishing his aim—the Communist Bogy.

The "Softness" of the Democracies.—It is fair to say we Democracies have of late done our best to gain a reputation for ruthlessness also. We have done what we can to disguise our "softness and humanity." If we have failed to convince the Berliners, it is really not our fault. There are even, among us, "weaker brethren" (like myself) whose stomachs turn at the strong meat—*not* the strong meat of mass destruction (which Berlin and all Germany richly deserve and must digest to the full before there can be a Europe pledged to outlaw war), but the strong meat of total absorption by Press and Radio in the *details* of mass destruction. The awful punishment is inflicted by the courage, skill and patience of our fighting men after years of preparation on all the fronts of the war effort. Their part is dignity, silence, action. The descriptive part is action of a different kind, the reverse of silent; its dignity is perhaps open to argument. In the hour of our own trial, we outlawed bomb-bores. But the answer to such criticism is—the needs of propaganda. And no one must speak a word in criticism of propaganda—the chief weapon of total war. Nevertheless, the aim of all propaganda, reduced to essence, is to *end this war* as quickly as possible. Stalin has always insisted that the extermination of Berlin should be No. 1 object in the Anglo-American air onslaught. If in its achievement we remove from the Germans their chief inducement to wriggle out by kicking out Hitler (viz., the "softness" of the Democracies), we cannot help it. Perhaps what we lose on the swings, we make up on the roundabouts. The Germans must make their submission total, with or without inducements. Meanwhile, we are undoubtedly doing something to kill our notorious reputation for national "softness."

That "Secret Weapon."—No doubt at all, the flesh-creeping possibilities of "secret weapons" are appreciated by all combatants. As a journalistic counter, it has a constant appeal for readers. The war leaders on both sides realise it and employ it in their propaganda aimed at discouraging the enemy or putting life into the war-weary. The secret weapon is used as a threat and as a stimulant, and hitherto has been more effective in promise than in performance. From Portugal a reader tells me that German propaganda services have been busy since August 1943 in the Portuguese Press with their new secret Rocket weapon, and he encloses an illustrated article which describes and illustrates its fearful potentialities, and even reveals its appearance. My correspondent writes: "I remember the Rocket as a war weapon in the 'Eighties. It was then known as the 'Congreve.'" The *Telegraph* of November 17 published an article on Rocket Shells. The article discoursed of technical difficulties and theoretical possibilities, but found place for this pregnant sentence: "If you can build a big enough rocket, it will go a very long way and will do a very great deal of damage on arrival. Of this there can be no possible doubt whatever, given a suitable environment." Gossip assures us that the Germans have been busy with rocket experiments in the Baltic. The latest utterance on the subject of secret weapons from Goebbels' hard-worked machine *was* rather "rocket-pregnant." It used the phrase: "(To our new secret weapon) the British will be unable to reply in kind, because they have not *sites* near enough to Germany." Note: *sites*, not bases. So much (and enough) for secret weapons. The weapons already released are reasonably flesh-creeping.



THE AFRICA STAR, and the ribbon and clasp emblems which will soon be issued to the men of the First and Eighth Armies: Provisional instructions have now been approved by the Army Council for the issue of the African Star ribbon and clasps, which the King has instituted "to commemorate the expulsion of the enemy from the continent of Africa." The ribbon is of pale buff colour with a central vertical red stripe and two narrower stripes, one dark blue and the other light blue. A silver emblem in the form of an Arabic 8 for members of the Eighth Army, and an Arabic 1 for members of the First Army, will be worn on the ribbon to denote the award of the clasp to the Africa Star. This award will be restricted to service in the Eighth or First Army respectively in the period from October 23, 1942 to May 12, 1943, both dates inclusive. The actual medal itself will not be issued till after the war

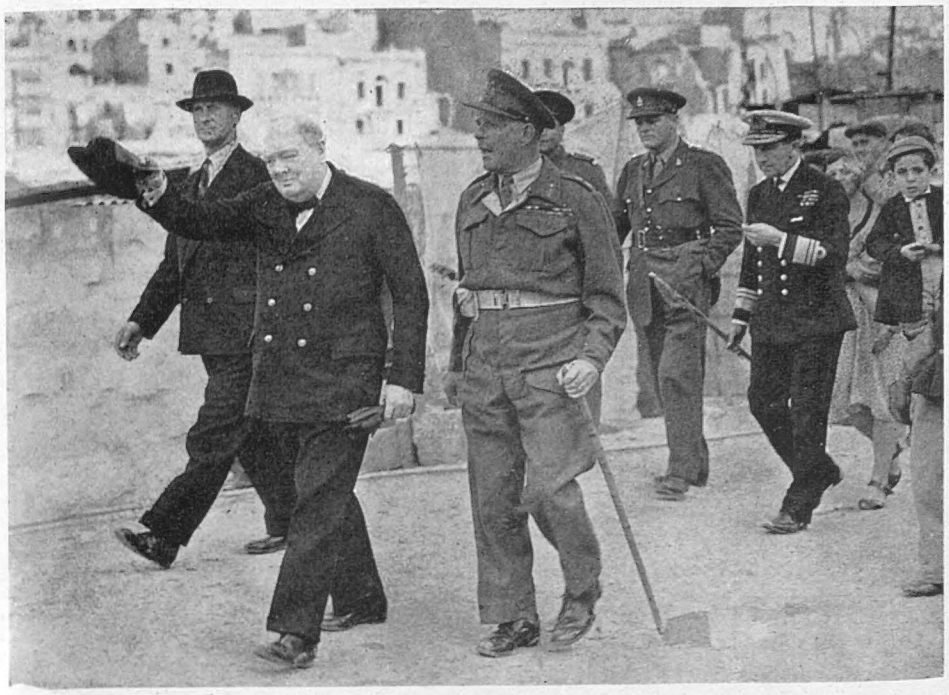
John Pym. I was tempted to travel up to London on December 8 to stand beside Mr. Isaac Foot (at his invitation) to do honour to the memory of John Pym who died 300 years ago that day, and whose bones lie in St. Margaret's Churchyard. Then I had to ask myself: *Is your journey really necessary?* FOR THE AYES: (1) John Pym fought for *liberty*. Is there any cause dearer to me? He stands for moral courage—the noblest virtue. (2) John Pym was my maternal great-grandfather (seven generations back). I bear his name and my family possess what I believe is the only authentic oil painting of this patriot. (It gives him a rather foxy face.) (3) Our family has always been proud of this ancestor. FOR THE NOES: (1) There is another descendant of John Pym who is in the House of Commons now. He will doubtless "represent the family" much more worthily and aptly. (2) The trains are abominably crowded. (3) After all, have men ever fought for any other cause than to win for themselves or for their country what they *believed* to be freedom (even the Nazis)? (4) And did they ever get it? The Noes had it. But John Pym remains enshrined in my heart as an English worthy, and as a desirable ancestor. Can these dry bones live? John Pym has proved that there is no surer immortality than for those who fight bravely, win or lose, even if there be but one cause worth fighting for; even if men must either fight continuously while they live or confess themselves living corpses.

"O Fortunatos"?—Do we paint too rosy a picture of the farmer's fortune in wartime? Certainly we do not, and cannot, over-estimate his labours and the difficulties which regulation, regimentation and official interference bring him; and in those respects the picture is not rosy. But when we hear of bumper harvests and big prices, we are inclined to suppose that on paper, or in gross, the average farmer is making unusual profits and putting money away. And sometimes a hint that things are not unsatisfactory is given me by my farming neighbours, when they tot up their "harvest-homes." A farmer friend from Somerset gives me a corrective. "Farming," he writes, "is unprofitable, and I figure to make a loss this year. Last year a profit of £31 was allowed by my local inspector of taxes." My friend works very hard and thoroughly understands his trade, which he has pursued for decades under conditions favourable for his particular forms of agriculture. He farms a small acreage. He certainly "appreciates his blessings"—country life suits him and he is a mine of knowledge on country lore. But I do not think he would subscribe to the view that "farming pays" financially; or ever has or ever will. In short, he is able and very willing to meet his losses on farming every year; and in wartime especially finds it a small price to pay for the enjoyment of the only effective anodyne to the evil and misery of war—to be perpetually busy and constantly preoccupied in useful, constructive and not disagreeable labours.

THE OLD STAGER

MR. CHURCHILL'S VISIT to the CAIRO CONFERENCE

Pictures Taken During the Voyage Out—*see also pp. 321 and 334-5 of this issue*



THE PRIME MINISTER LANDS AT MALTA ON HIS WAY TO THE CONFERENCE, and visits the Dockyard area. With him in this picture is Field-Marshal Lord Gort, V.C., Governor of the Island: the second on the right behind Lord Gort is Captain Randolph Churchill

ON BOARD THE WARSHIP WHICH TOOK THE PREMIER TO THE MIDDLE EAST: Mr. Churchill is here seen on the vessel's bridge: in the foreground, using binoculars, is his daughter, Section Officer Sarah Oliver, of the W.A.A.F.

A GROUP ON THE QUARTER-DECK OF THE WARSHIP EN ROUTE FOR CAIRO. From left to right are—Section Officer Sarah Oliver, Mr. Churchill, Major Desmond Morton, M.C. (Personal Assistant), Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham (First Sea Lord), and Lord Moran (Mr. Churchill's physician)

MR. CHURCHILL WITH THE GOVERNOR OF MALTA during his call at the George Cross Island on the way out, where he was given a great reception by the populace

Above and on left—With Rear-Admiral Mackenzie, Vice-Admiral Hamilton, Lord Gort, Captain Randolph Churchill, and others, the Prime Minister inspected the Malta Dockyard. The "V" sign, given by the Premier, was enthusiastically answered by many of the workers

The ATLANTIC U-BOATS BEATEN

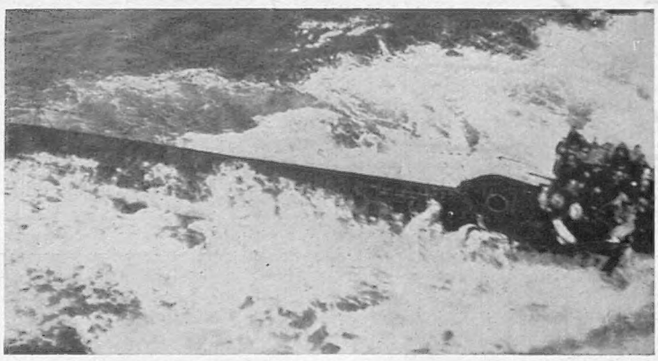
First Pictures of the Sinking by Coastal Command Aircraft of Six of Them

With the news published earlier this week of the destruction of six U-boats in the Atlantic by Coastal Command and United States aircraft, the Battle of the Seas entered on a new phase. It was one of the most spectacular actions yet carried out against the German submarine "packs" on the transatlantic shipping routes.

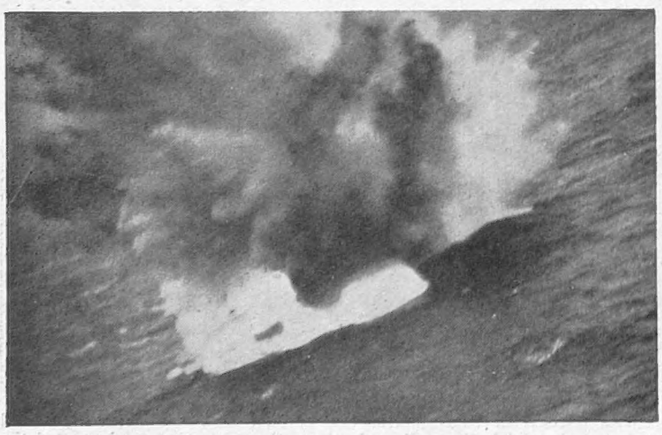
The first battle opened when a concentration of U-boats was reported near two convoys south of Iceland. Very long-range Liberators and Hudsons of Coastal Command and Venturas of the U.S. Navy were detailed for close cover and offensive sweeps. Three U-boats were sunk as a result, and the submarine "pack" broke off the engagement. Shortly afterwards an important convoy sailing further south was reported to be heading into another concentration of U-boats. As night fell the latter were located. For ten hours the battle lasted, and the submarines were driven off with the loss of another three.

Apart from the six vessels definitely sunk, another nine were attacked. The whole action lasted altogether eight days, although U-boats were sighted and attacked during only four of them. Only the bad weather and poor visibility saved the enemy additional losses

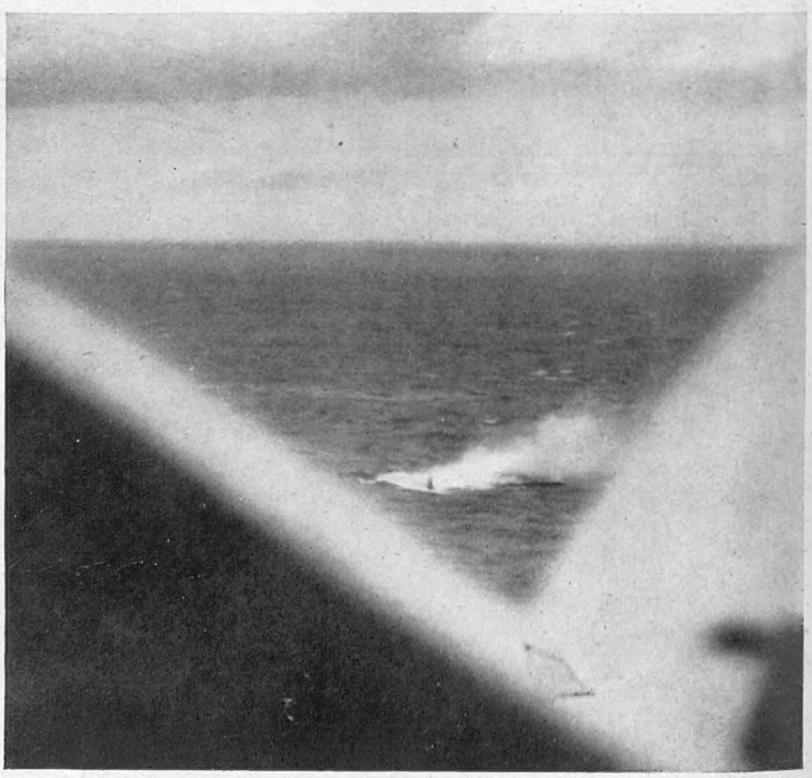
A SPECTACULAR PICTURE TAKEN FROM A BRITISH AIRCRAFT DURING THE ATTACKS ON THE U-BOATS: A submarine after being crippled by a Liberator. Mortally damaged, it wallows half-submerged—long enough for the crew to inflate their dinghies. The German seamen can be seen huddled together in the doomed vessel's conning-tower



A DOOMED U-BOAT A FEW SECONDS BEFORE SHE SANK, when the sailors grouped on the conning-tower were swept into the sea. The Liberator which sank this vessel flew over her at very low level



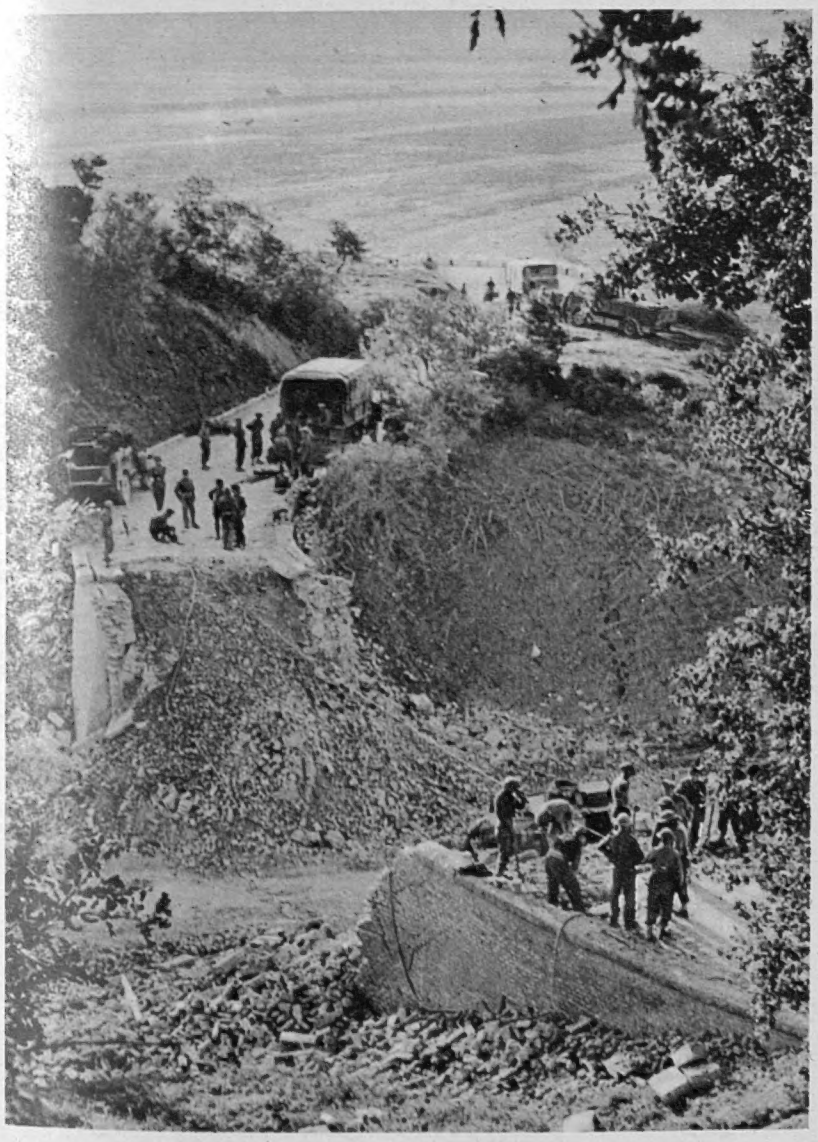
DEPTH-CHARGES ARE BEING DROPPED ON A U-BOAT CAUGHT ON THE SURFACE. They are falling alongside the enemy craft between the conning-tower and the stern



HOW THE SUBMARINES WERE SEEN BY THE AIRMEN: A U-boat on the surface after depth-charges had been dropped. After an explosion, a great cloud of smoke is seen pouring from its shattered hull. Seconds later, it went under, leaving bodies and debris floating on the surface of the Atlantic

THIS IS THE SANGRO, NOW CROSSED IN FORCE BY THE EIGHTH ARMY. The slope beyond the river was held by the enemy, who had dug himself in extensively, but without avail. On the left is the bridge of nineteen arches across the Sangro which was thoroughly demolished by the retreating Germans. The break-through by the Eighth Army was considerable, despite the heavy rains which hindered General Montgomery's pursuit of the enemy

The EIGHTH ARMY CROSS the SANGRO RIVER



YET ANOTHER BRIDGE COMPLETELY DEMOLISHED BY THE GERMANS outside Casalbordino, to the north-west of the port of Vasto

After a period of intensive preparation, and despite the heavy rains which threatened to hinder operations, the Eighth Army crossed the barrier of the Sangro River last week. Thus another stage on the road to Rome has been successfully accomplished. In their retreat, the Germans destroyed bridges and roads, and sowed extensive minefields: nevertheless, they were ejected from a number of strategic points and ridges and many prisoners were taken. The pictures on this page show the nature of the country immediately to the north of the Sangro through which our troops made their initial advances

ANOTHER VIEW OF THE RIVER BARRIER NOW SUCCESSFULLY OVERCOME. The ridge in the distance was strongly fortified with entrenched positions, but it was soon abandoned by the Germans, after they had made the usual demolitions and sown the usual extensive minefields

JUST BEFORE THE OPENING OF THE OFFENSIVE. British infantry returning from the front line: in the background of the picture may be seen 25-pounder gun emplacements amongst the hilly country. Note the snow on the mountains in the distance

b

A VISIT TO THE PARTISANS OF YUGOSLAVIA

Carried Out by a British Naval Party from the Dalmatian Coast

THE LEADER OF THE BRITISH NAVAL PARTY, mounted ready for his ride through wild country to the headquarters of the Partisans. The latter are the patriots of Yugoslavia who are carrying on bitter and unremitting warfare against the German invaders of their country

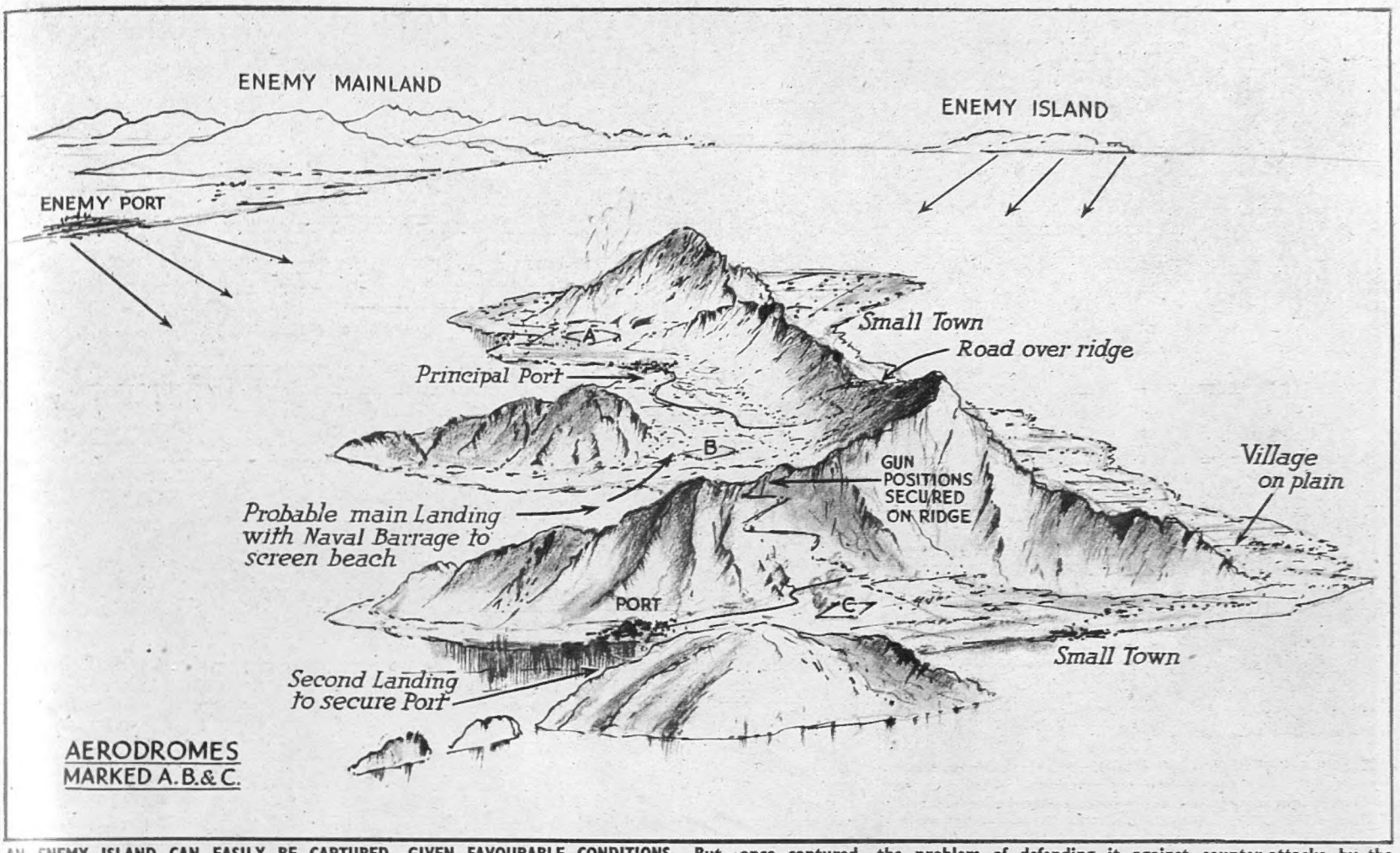
ON THE WALL OF A DALMATIAN VILLAGE held by the guerillas of Yugoslavia : the slogan painted in bold lettering reads " Long live Brother Stalin "

The crew of a small British naval vessel has just spent three days in a Dalmatian port, with some of the Partisans who are engaged in a bitter struggle against the Germans in Yugoslavia. The British ship was compelled to enter the port because of circumstances beyond the control of its crew. During their stay they visited the Partisan headquarters—a barely furnished room lit by candles, with a picture of Stalin on the whitewashed walls. Questions were asked and answered on both sides. These guerillas have carried on their heroic fight in the tortuous highways and byways of the lower slopes of the Dinaric Alps. Once a furtive, underground affair, in the hands of unorganised bands, the forces of resistance have now developed into a disciplined army. To-day, the Partisans are in control of the greater part of the Dalmatian coast, apart from the larger towns, and they are waging ceaseless warfare against their German oppressors

THE CHILDREN OF A DALMATIAN VILLAGE WHICH IS NOW IN PARTISAN HANDS : On their caps they wear the bright badge of the National Youth Movement. They are cheering the British naval party on its way into the interior, and appear to be giving the " clenched fist " salute of the Soviet

REPRESENTATIVE TYPES OF THE PARTISAN ARMY. Many women guerillas are among the forces fighting for liberation from the Germans. In the top left above is Zaga, a Serbian girl with a big reputation as a sniper among the mountains. In the top right is Zina, famed throughout Croatia as a saboteur and thrower of grenades

IN THE HEADQUARTERS AT A PARTISAN-OCCUPIED VILLAGE visited by the British naval party. In the centre is the Commander of the guard charged with carrying out police duties in the village : on his right is the soldier who acted as interpreter during the British visit



AN ENEMY ISLAND CAN EASILY BE CAPTURED, GIVEN FAVOURABLE CONDITIONS. But, once captured, the problem of defending it against counter-attacks by the enemy is not easy. Here is an hypothetical island, with an analysis of the various operations involved in its capture and its retention in the face of heavy counter-attack (see also accompanying article)—*Drawing by Percy Home*

The recent loss of three captured islands in the Dodecanese has brought up the problem of how such acquisitions should be defended once they have been captured. Some of the essential factors are outlined in the case of the rocky island depicted here. This island is within striking distance of enemy bases, from which he could organise counter-attacks. The main amphibious assault has been made against the principal port on the north-west of the island, while a secondary one has been directed against the bay to the south-west. Both are presumed to be successful. Prior to the landings, aerodromes A and C were bombed heavily : a third landing on the east coast would be desirable in order to secure the road leading over the island's main ridge. Another transverse ridge has been secured by the south-westerly attack ; this gives artillery command over the valley to the north, thus aiding the encirclement and capture of the chief port by the forces landed at the middle beach. Immediately the island has been cleared, fighter aircraft must occupy aerodrome B, which has not been heavily strafed for this reason. A.-A. artillery must be rushed to all airfield sites, and gun emplacements constructed at points giving wide fields of fire

ISLANDS AND AIR POWER

The Problems of their Attack and Defence Analysed in the Light of Recent Events in the Dodecanese

—With a Special Diagram Drawing

IN the Pacific in recent weeks the Allies have been conquering islands ; in the Eastern Mediterranean we have been losing them. Air power was undoubtedly the factor that has tipped the scale in both theatres of war. In the Ægean, Cos, Leros and Samos were about 350 miles from the nearest Allied airfields in Cyprus, but only a few minutes' flying time from Nazi bases in Rhodes and elsewhere. In the Pacific, the Japs were not entirely devoid of air support in the islands they lost, they simply had not the local reserves of men and material to stand the pace, so in the end the result was the same.

Consider first the question of attacking some hypothetical island garrison which (by conquest of other territory) has at last come within range of attack. Fighter planes are the *sine qua non* of the attack, so we must either have several bases within sixty or seventy miles of the island, or be able to guarantee the safety of several carriers during the first phases of the attack. The "softening-up" process comes first ; fighter-bombers and medium bombers attack enemy shipping and internal transport by day, heavier bombers cripple his ports, airfields, supply dumps and strong-points as opportunity offers. Subject to the limitations of time and general strategy, the softening process can be extended until the island surrenders to air attack alone, as did Pantellaria and Lampedusa. But more usually a combined operation will be needed. Our object is not merely to land on the island, but to do so in a way which enables us to bring the enemy to battle and destroy him. Big ports are rarely suitable for landings—they usually have deep water right up to the landing-stages (whereas our tank craft need shelving beaches), and, in any case, will abound in strong-points and gun positions. If we expect any opposition worthy of the name, the landing must be at a point where tanks can climb ashore, which is not covered by the enemy's best artillery, and yet has a practicable fighting route to the island's key points. If no place fulfils these requirements, then it will be a case of seizing one of the smaller ports as a bridgehead, by a joint airborne and seaborne landing party of shock troops, supported by as intense an air and sea bombardment as can be managed. All aerodromes will be bombed heavily, but if it is intended to use one ourselves at a later stage of the fight, then the one selected will be attacked more by blast bombs than by the penetrating crater-making type. The others will simply be "plastered."

Under cover of such a bombardment the bridgeheads will be won and widened. In the island the artist has fashioned for us, Aerodrome "B" will probably serve the attackers best, so the other two will be obliterated, à la Battipaglia. The adjacent bay would also probably be chosen as the main landing point. A successful bridgehead here would virtually cut the island in two, if the ridge behind could be won. Once considerable forces had landed here they could move on the main port from the rear, while a holding force along the ridge would command the Aerodrome "C," and its adjoining port, until the attackers felt free to deal with it. When the principal port, and two of the three aerodromes are in the hands of the attack, the fate of the island would be sealed.

If we consider our hypothetical island to be within equal range of the enemy's mainland as well as our own, there comes the problem of holding what we have won. The essential of defence is the same as for attack—air cover.

If the island is big enough to provide two or three main fighter aerodromes, plus a few emergency and dispersal fields, and if we have sufficient command of the sea to maintain (even at very heavy cost) the garrison's strength of men, machines and material, then the island can be held, as Malta was held.

If air cover cannot be provided and maintained (i.e., if the sea supply route is too long and too weak), then the island will be lost, for the enemy will simply apply the attacking process in reverse.

The victorious invader will thus give first attention to his air power, improving and creating more airfields. All beaches and possible landing points will be mined as liberally as possible, and gun emplacements created in the positions that command them. A boom defence may be set up off the principal ports, special attention given to A.-A. defences, anti-tank blockades created on the island's roads and tracks. Above all, a large reserve of petrol, food and ammunition will be built up in carefully dispersed dumps. Quite obviously an attempt to interrupt supplies would precede any attack, so the garrison must make provision to bridge over any interruption in the flow of supplies. If these essentials can be secured, the garrison can reasonably hope to hold the island as long as need be. But air power is undoubtedly the keystone of the defence.

THE THREE ISLANDS which were taken by British forces, and which later were lost to the Germans—largely owing to a lack of nearby fighter bases from which the enemy's dive-bombers could have been checked by our own aircraft

HEAVY ATTACK BY THE "ANTIQUATED" DIVE-BOMBER BROUGHT ABOUT THE SURRENDER OF THE ISLAND OF LEROS. Whilst the Stukas were concentrating on one given area, parachutists were being dropped from other aircraft, and the British defenders were unable to eliminate them on their way down to the ground—*Drawing by E. G. Lambert*

The DIVE BOMBER at LEROS

The Principal Weapon of the Germans against the British Garrisons in the Dodecanese Islands

—Special Sphere Drawings and Diagrams

Over the island of Leros, after its capture and successful occupation by British troops, the Germans had undoubted air superiority: when they began their attacks, their aircraft were, in fact, quite unchallenged, so that the dive-bomber was able to stage a most successful come-back—after our own air experts had condemned it as "antiquated" for modern war methods. As an illustration of the immunity which air domination gave to the enemy, they were able to drop parachutists *by daylight* around some of the bays held by our men. These troops "were exposed to a blast of machine-gun fire which should have wiped out the lot": yet the diversion created by heavy bombing by the Stukas, by ground-strafing and by the scattering of hand-grenades, so disturbed the defenders that much of their fire was wasted. The parachutists were dropped all over the place: they came on to the scene in lumbering Ju. 52 transports, each of which discharged about fifteen men with grey parachutes and a group leader with a white one. Very few of these men should ever have been permitted to land, and many of them did, in fact, die a horrible death; some of them were carried to death by the Stukas as the latter dived through the falling men; others perished as their aircraft plunged in flames. The Germans, however, are notoriously ruthless in their methods—even when their own men are involved—enough of the parachutists were able to land unharmed to organise into a formidable fighting force: by occupying the central strategic waist of the island, and by continuing their heavy dive-bombing attacks on our land forces, they paved the way for the ultimate recapture of Leros

Just at a moment when the Air Ministries of the Allies had written off the Stuka as an obsolete weapon, owing to its vulnerability to fighter attack, the Germans brought off their three successive *coups* in the Dodecanese Islands—mainly by the employment of this very weapon. It was unfortunate—to say the least—that no fighter bases were within easy striking distance of Cos, Leros and Samos: had our Spitfires or Hurricanes been available on the spot, the story would probably have been quite different.

To-day it is once again recognised that the Stuka is a deadly instrument—one of the *most* deadly—against hidden gun emplacements and defensive strong-points. The whole secret of this aircraft is that it can carry out precision bombing of a most destructive nature: it can pound away until the point under attack is obliterated. Nor can the defenders do overmuch to counter its deadly effect, as it requires the strongest morale to withstand the shattering assault.

The German dive-bombers in the Dodecanese worked from bases in Crete and Rhodes: not only did they carry out attacks on the ground forces on the islands, but also amongst the warships and supply vessels operating in the Ægean which, necessarily, were without Allied air cover. For two months, in fact, the naval forces in the Eastern Mediterranean faced dive-bombing attacks described as the heaviest since Tobruk.

ENEMY BOMBS FALLING ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF PORTOLAGO, ON THE ISLAND OF LEROS. This was occupied by our troops some weeks ago, together with Cos and Samos: it was recaptured by the Germans on November 16 after fierce fighting. The picture above was taken during one of the many dive-bombing attacks carried out by the enemy's Stukas

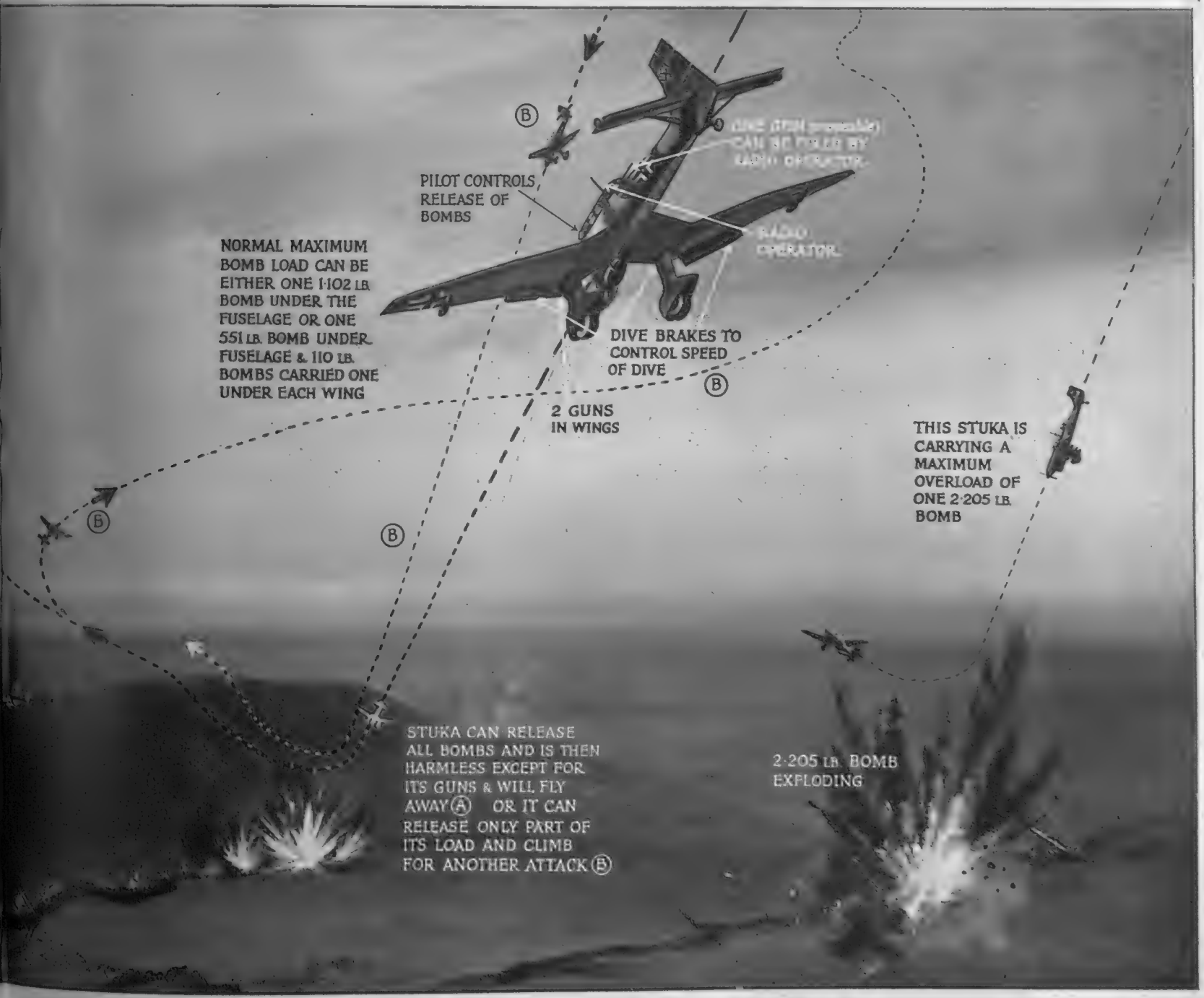
DURING THE STRUGGLE FOR THE POSSESSION OF LEROS: An enemy equipment barge on fire in Alinda Bay. Part of the town of Leros itself may be seen in the foreground of the picture

THE TOWN OF CASTELROSSO, WITH THE TURKISH COAST BEYOND. All three islands lie quite close to the mainland: fighter bases there, had they existed, would have saved the situation

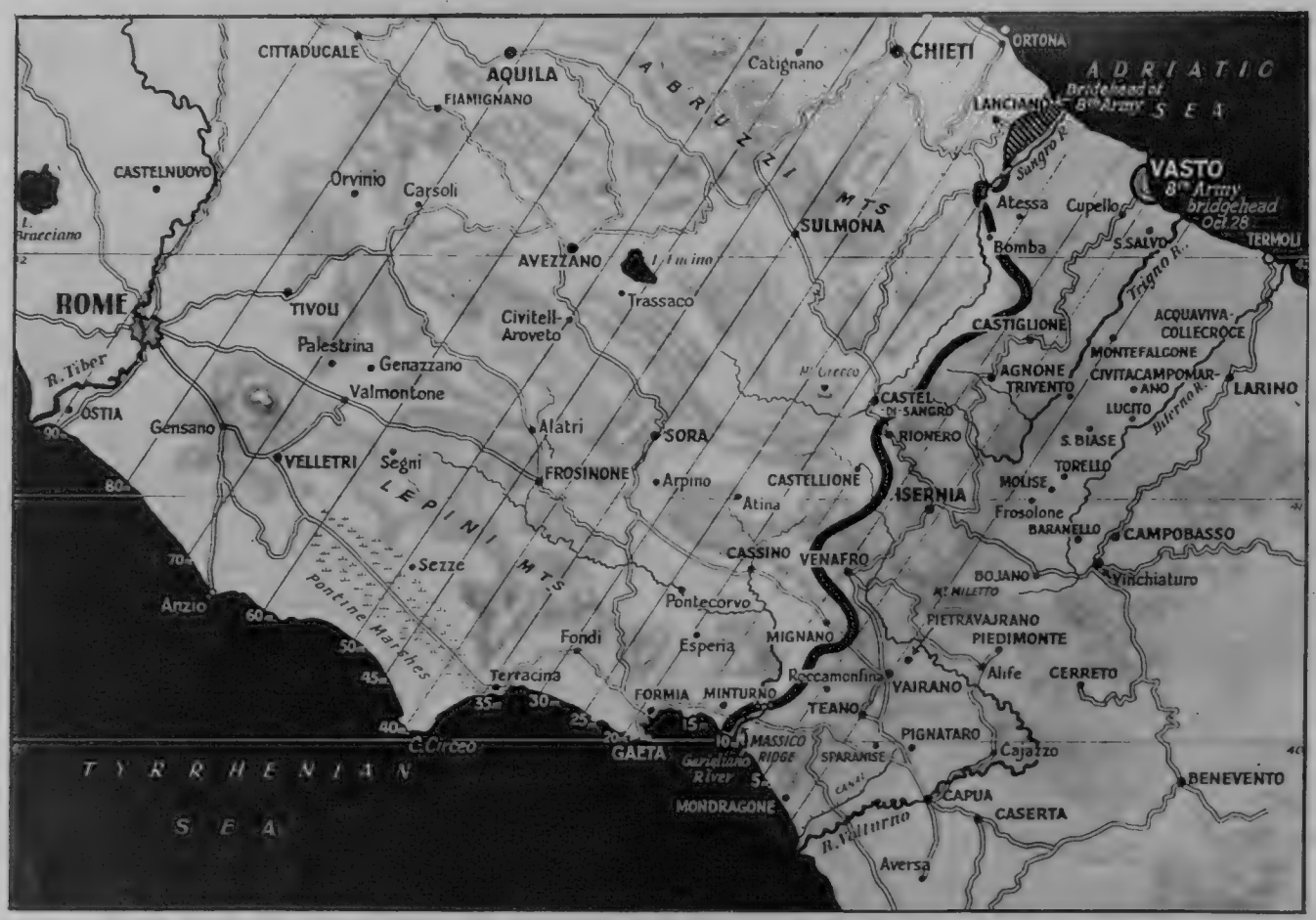
Below—**THE DANGER OF THE CONCENTRATED STUKA ATTACK: What the Ju.87 dive-bomber can do, with bombs and machine-guns, against a given target**—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

Once again the Germans have brought out their Stukas, for so long described by the experts as "obsolete"—and once again they have achieved a great success. These comparatively slow and vulnerable aircraft were developed from the old Junkers K47 dive bombers, assembled at the Malmo factory established in Sweden in 1929. (At that time Germany was not allowed under the terms of the Versailles Treaty to build her own aircraft factories in the Reich itself.) The chief lesson of Leros is that the Stuka is still a formidable weapon, so long as it can operate out of range of Allied fighters.

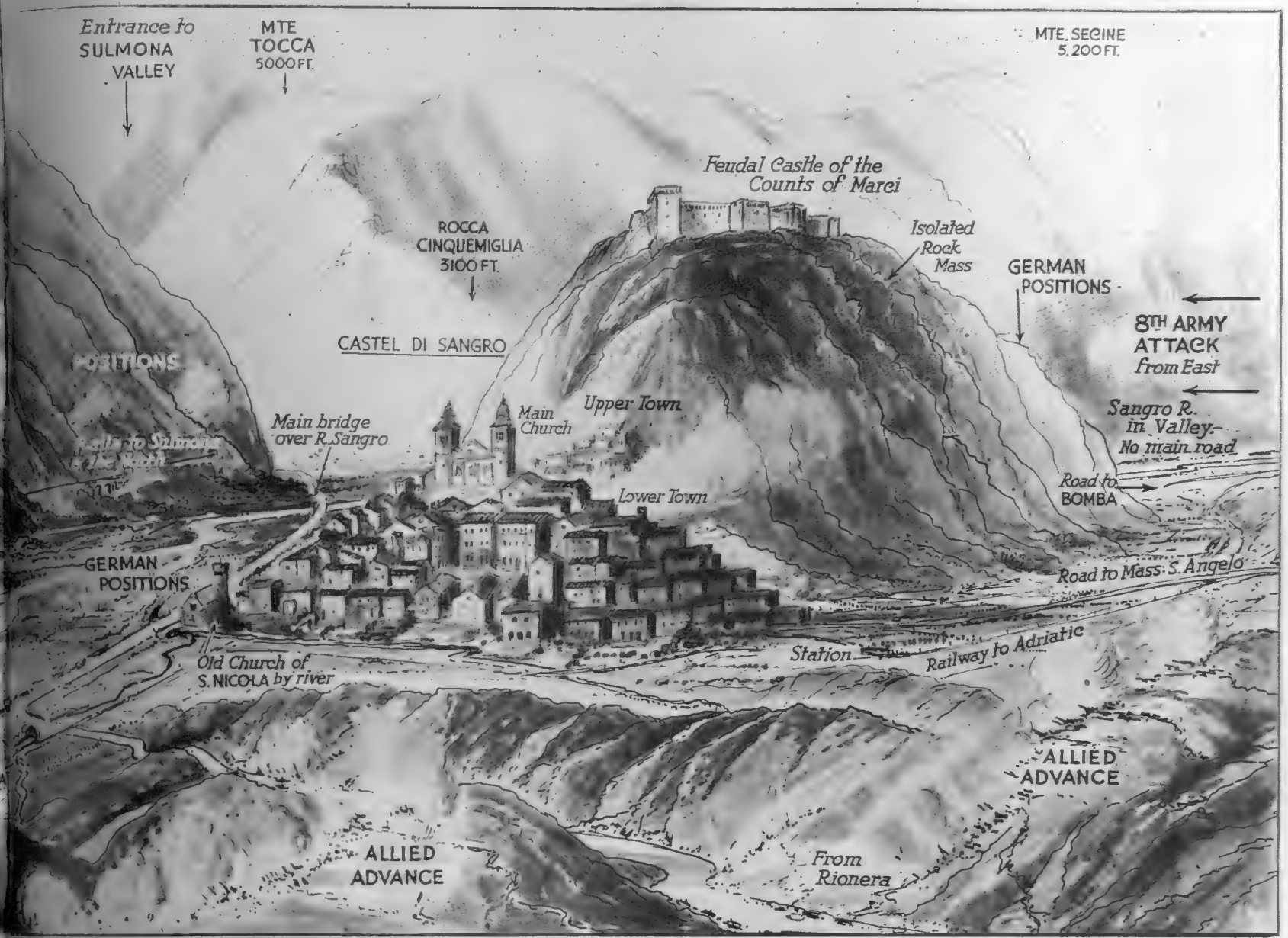
Over the island large formations of Ju.87's bombarded our positions. As no fighter bases were near at hand from which Allied fighters could operate, they were able to pursue the same tactics which made them so dreaded all over Europe in the early days of the war. Although the moral effect of dive-bombing is almost its greatest terror, the Stuka can drop a quite devastating load of bombs. The normal load is one 1,100-lb. bomb under the fuselage, or one 550-lb. bomb under the fuselage and one 110-lb. bomb under each wing; for a maximum overload, a 2,200-lb. bomb can be carried, however. Soon after dropping its bombs, the Stuka can still attack ground troops with its two forward-firing machine-guns, although this might not be considered deadly enough to risk the aircraft in further dives against armed ground positions.



PUSHING AHEAD IN ITALY—The Attack on the Key Point Town of Castel di Sangro: and Other Pictures from the Fighting Line—*With Special Sphere Drawings*



THE ALLIES IN ROME BY CHRISTMAS? THE DISTANCE YET TO BE TRAVERSED BY THE FIFTH AND EIGHTH ARMIES: After the success of the landings at Reggio, and the subsequent successes of the Allies at Salerno, the two armies moving up the mainland are still some distance from Rome. The map above shows what has still to be accomplished before the Italian capital is ours: the line across the peninsula, in front of the shaded Occupied area, shows how the Allied front ran at the opening of the present month, after the crossing of the Sangro River by the Eighth. The transverse lines indicate five-mile intervals



CONVERGING ON THE GREAT GERMAN BASTION OF CASTEL DI SANGRO. THE TWO LINES OF ATTACK WHICH PRESSED TOWARDS THE ENEMY'S KEY POSITION at the entrance to the Sulmona Valley, through which passes one of the main roads to the north. The Allies advanced from the Rionera and Agnone districts with the intention of reaching the Sangro River, which here flows past the town as a wide and swift stream (See notes below)—*Drawing by Percy Horne*

While large-scale operations were developing on the right flank of the Eighth Army at the mouth of the River Sangro, forces of the left wing were penetrating through a tangled mass of hills towards Castel di Sangro, a key-point town, the holding of which blocks the entrance to the Sulmona Valley, one of the northward routes through the Apennines. As the Allied forces pushed forward from Rionero, fires were observed to be burning both at Alfedena and at Castel di Sangro. These were not caused by shellfire, but gave evidence that the enemy was engaged in some form of destruction for his own purposes. Two lines of advance were being developed here, both of them pushing forward to the upper waters of the Sangro, which in ordinary times is a wide and swiftly-flowing stream, as it winds through the narrow Castel di Sangro Valley, shown on the left of the drawing above.

The more southern of these two lines of attack came up from the Rionero district, and in spite of heavy bombardment from the enemy's positions on the slopes of Monte Arazecca and the lower ground at its feet, these forces pushed forward to Ponte Zittola, a railway station on the line running northwards, which here makes a violent hairpin turn towards the Sulmona Valley. In doing so, it passes through several tunnels when crossing the shoulder of Monte Arazecca. In front of Castel di Sangro two tributary streams join the River Sangro, which is crossed by the main road leading into the Sulmona Valley. The town is picturesquely placed at the foot of a rock mass on which is perched the feudal castle of the Counts of Marsi. There is an upper and a lower town; on the summit of the latter rise twin towers of the main church of Castel di Sangro, while below, on the edge of one of the tributary streams can be found the old church of St. Nicola. Some ancient houses dating from medieval times are embellished with the armorial bearings of their former owners.

The second line of attack was from due east of Castel di Sangro, the forces pushing over the hills facing Agnone, by way of Vasto Girardi, a mountain village which had to be reached by one of the tortuous secondary roads which alone pierce these hills. From the heights thus gained, Allied artillery were able to engage the enemy's gun positions on the north side of the Sangro. By these two attacks the enemy's positions were gradually being encircled. Much of the fighting had to be conducted in the severest weather, when every mountain stream was swollen to a rushing torrent. Many of these icy streams had to be waded through by the advancing troops.

On left—**GUNNERS FROM THE TYNESIDE ON THE FIFTH ARMY FRONT: A battery of 3·7-in. guns in action during a night shoot**—*Drawing by W. G. Whitaker*

The regiment of which these men form part was originally enlisted on the Tyneside; although subsequent reinforcements have included men from all parts of the country, the Tyneside element is still strongly predominant. At the beginning of the war they did anti-aircraft duty on their native heath, moving to Tees-side in 1940. Later that same year they went out to the Middle East and did fine work during the siege of Tobruk. After the desert campaign with the Eighth Army they took part in the Italian invasion and were complimented by the Commander of the Fifth Army for their work on the beaches at Salerno. During two and a half years of service abroad the regiment has accounted for sixty enemy planes and has seen service in Egypt Libya, Tripolitania, Syria, Palestine, Iraq and Italy

THE ALLIED AIR FORCES IN ITALY SEEK OUT AND DESTROY ENEMY-HELD WARSHIPS. This reconnaissance photograph shows the German-held Italian cruiser of the Regolo class, the "Ottaviano Augusto" (in bay at bottom of picture), lying on her side in Ancona Harbour, on the east coast of Italy. The 440-ft. light cruiser was hit by Mitchell bombers of the U.S. 12th Air Force. The Royal yacht "Savoia" (in bay at left) was slightly damaged during the same attack

A REAL-LIFE DRAMA IN THE MEDITERRANEAN : The rescue by the Royal Navy of a large party of ENSA artists from an open boat after the ship in which they were travelling had been torpedoed by a German aircraft—*Drawing by Wm. McDowell*

When their ship was torpedoed recently in the Mediterranean, 122 Ensa artists had a narrow escape from drowning. The torpedo was launched from a German aircraft: it struck when most of the passengers were in their cabins preparing for dinner. All the lights went out; the ship took a big list, but quickly righted herself. Night was falling and a heavy swell was running; when the passengers took to the boats some of the latter were a bit crowded—one had eighty—but all the artists made the best of it. The boats cruised about in company by the light of the moon, "which was a great blessing and comfort," as one of the victims later put it. After a few hours, warships approached: "We signalled to them with torches, and before long we were hauled up the side and treated with all the customary kindness of the Navy." All the people rescued were fitted out on board with battle-dress, but most of their "props" were lost for ever in the waters of the Mediterranean. Half of the Ensa artists were women

THE WAR AT SEA

Recent Incidents in the Mediterranean and the Northern Atlantic Portrayed by Sphere Artists

THE "MAGIC EYE" PAINTED ON THE BOW OF A BRITISH DESTROYER : H.M.S. *Broadway* was formerly the U.S.S. *Hunt*; she was built at Newport News, Virginia, in 1920, and was one of the fifty destroyers handed over to Britain by America in exchange for bases. Painted on her bows she now has a "Magic Eye" to ward off evil—an old superstition which comes from China, where all vessels are so painted. H.M.S. *Broadway* operated on Atlantic convoys until recently, and has covered nearly 100,000 miles. She has taken part in the sinking of two U-boats and attacked many others, her first victim being rammed and the second sunk by depth-charges. Her first "kill" was nearly her last as, when she rammed the U-boat, its hydroplanes ripped open her port-plates. She barely made port, but after hurried repairs she was off again, operating with Canadian groups and carrying a British crew

THE END OF ANOTHER U-BOAT : The crew lining the deck of the vessel before diving overboard

AFTER THE U-BOAT HAD BEEN DISABLED and forced to the surface by a British corvette : These two dramatic pictures show the last moments in the life of a German U-boat as recorded by members of the crew of the British corvette *Starwort*, one of the ships which helped to make the kill. The U-boat was depth-charged to the surface and was then immediately engaged by the ship's guns. Then her crew lined up on deck, dived overboard and, shortly afterwards, the U-boat sank stern-first. The survivors were picked up by British vessels

WEATHER HAZARDS WHICH THE CONVOY ESCORTS IN THE ATLANTIC HAVE TO FACE IN WINTER: An impression of a Flower class corvette, of 930 tons, being thrown high out of the water by a heavy sea—*Drawing by Wm. McDowell*

The Navy possesses a great number of this useful class of vessel: about 100 of the Flower class are in commission, apart from other vessels of a similar character. So far, about twenty of them, belonging to the Royal Navy and the Royal Canadian Navy, have been lost: but they have accounted for more than twenty-five U-boats, whose loss is definite, with a further twenty U-boats seriously damaged. The Flower class are commonly known amongst the irreverent as the "Herbaceous Border": they differ slightly in design and appearance, and are of about 930 tons displacement, with a length of 193 ft. They are usually armed with one 4-in. anti-aircraft gun, as well as a pom-pom and machine-guns: their chief weapon when fighting the U-boats is, however, the depth-charge thrower. The Flowers are a sturdy class as, indeed, they have to be to withstand the heavy seas they encounter on their work of convoy protection and patrol in the North Atlantic during the heavy winter gales

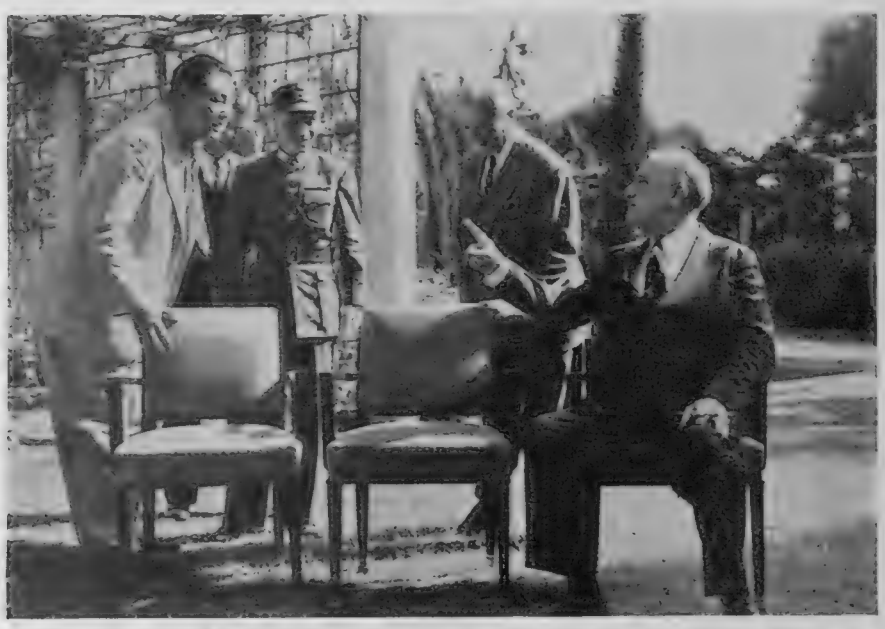
A GERMAN SUBMARINE IS BLOWN TO THE SURFACE BY THE BLAST FROM DEPTH-CHARGES DROPPED BY AN AMERICAN AIRCRAFT. The crippled raider was later sunk by American destroyers which dashed to the scene of the attack—*Drawing by Wm. McDowell*

As the depth-charges went home, a geyser of water was thrown high up into the air and the U-boat was forced to the surface by the blast. When the surface warships arrived on the scene, the submarine was very quickly accounted for by shell-fire. The aircraft which took part in the attack was a Martin Mariner, a comparatively new type of long-range patrol-bomber which is fitted with wing-tip floats. This big aircraft is equipped with a galley, sleeping accommodation, heating and ventilation: it is capable of staying away from its base for a long period of time. The two motors with which it is equipped are Wright Cyclones of 1,600 h.p. each

The MEETING of the "BIG THREE"

Official Pictures taken during the Far East Conference near Cairo, between Mr. Churchill, President Roosevelt and Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek

THE THREE PRINCIPALS AT THE MEETING—MARSHAL CHIANG KAI-SHEK, MR. ROOSEVELT AND MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL photographed during the course of the Conference which decided on the steps to be taken to crush the Japs in the Far East. Before this photograph was taken, the little comedy seen below was enacted



A FRIENDLY ARGUMENT BETWEEN PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT AND THE GENERALISSIMO as to who should sit in the centre. The Generalissimo at length prevailed, and the President took the place of honour. Above, Dr. Hollington Tong, Chinese Vice-Minister of Information, is seen adding his persuasions to those of his chief

THE THREE-POWER LEADERS WITH THEIR DIPLOMATIC ADVISERS AT THE CONFERENCE NEAR CAIRO : A group picture taken during the discussions, showing some of the principal figures who took part in framing the plans against the Japs

In the front row are the following—Marshal Chiang Kai-shek, Mr. Roosevelt, Mr. Winston Churchill and Madame Chiang Kai-shek. Standing behind, from left to right, are—Sir Alexander Cadogan, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; Mr. Anthony Eden, Foreign Secretary; Mr. Lawrence Steinhardt, U.S. Ambassador to Turkey (wearing hat); Mr. John G. Winant, U.S. Ambassador to Great Britain; Mr. Harold Macmillan, British Minister in North Africa; Dr. Wang Chung-Lui, Secretary-General of the Supreme National Defence Council of China; the Rt. Hon. R. G. Casey, Minister of State, Middle East; Lord Killearn, British Ambassador to Egypt Major Desmond Morton, Special Assistant to Mr. Churchill; Mr. Averell Harriman, U.S. Ambassador to the U.S.S.R.; Lord Leathers, Minister of War Transport; and (on extreme right) Mr. Harry Hopkins

***On left*—THE SERVICE CHIEFS WHO WERE PRESENT TO ADVISE THE THREE LEADERS**

In the front row are—Marshal Chiang Kai-shek, Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill. Behind are General Marshall, Chief of Staff, U.S. Army; Field-Marshal Sir John Dill, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O. Senior British Military Representative on the Combined Chiefs of Staffs Committee, Washington; Air Chief-Marshal Sir Charles Portal, Britain's Chief of Air Staff; Admiral Leahy, U.S. Chief of Staff (Special Assistant to the President); Admiral King, C.-in-C., U.S. Navy; Vice-Admiral Wilson Brown, Presidential Aide; Admiral of the Fleet Sir Andrew Cunningham, G.C.B., D.S.O., First Sea Lord; Major-General Sir Hastings Ismay, K.C.B., D.S.O., Military Secretary to the British War Cabinet; General Sir Alan Brooke, G.C.V.O., D.S.O. Chief of the Imperial General Staff; Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, G.C.V.O. D.S.O., Supreme Allied Commander South-East Asia; Shang Cheng, a Director of the National Military Council of China; General Stilwell, Commanding General, U.S. Forces, China, India and Burma (behind Shang Cheng); and Air Lieut. Chow Chih-Jou, Chief of Staff of the Chinese Air Force

AN INCIDENT WHILST THE BIG GROUP PICTURE WAS BEING POSED. President Roosevelt leans over to shake hands with Lord Leathers, whilst Mr. Churchill (who has not yet removed his hat) chats to Madame Chiang Kai-shek. The other figures in this picture can be identified by reference to the big group picture reproduced at the top of these pages

THE CRUISER IN WARTIME

The Very Important Functions which this Class of Warship Has to Perform

THE recent loss of the *Charybdis* in the Channel broke a lull of about a year in cruiser losses. It was, in fact, the first sinking of a cruiser announced since that of the *Coventry* in October 1942.

One of the chief reasons for the decreased toll in our cruisers has been the clearing-up of the Mediterranean, where, in the past, they have been subjected to very intensive air attacks.

The sinking of the *Charybdis* has focussed attention on the tremendously varying tasks which fall to the cruiser's lot. In essence, her main task is, as it has always been, to exercise control of the seas once sea command has been ensured by the main Battle Fleet. Under this heading of exercising control comes the work of patrolling, often at tremendous distances from the nearest base, in search of enemy blockade-runners and commerce raiders.

Speed, striking power and, above all, endurance are the chief requisites of vessels of the cruiser type. They must be able to keep the sea for weeks on end, if need be, and then fight a battle in waters far removed from any shore supplies. They must be stout enough, too, to remain at sea and maintain their speed in practically any weather.

Another of their functions is shadowing and scouting. It will be recalled that it was largely due to the dogged shadowing by our cruisers that the *Bismarck* was held and brought to battle in the foulest of weather. When a fleet is at sea it is likely that it will have with it a screen of scouting cruisers which, working far ahead of the main body, will comb a wide area on the look-out for the slightest sign of enemy movement.

They may also be used to stiffen a convoy escort, especially from the point of view of anti-aircraft fire, the dual-purpose long-range guns of the modern cruiser providing a formidable weapon against either enemy air or surface craft.

Although British cruisers have done outstanding work in narrow waters during this war, this does not mean that their use as "long-range" ships is no longer necessary. Circumstances have often heaped on them the duties of a sort of maid-of-all-work, but they have not relieved them of the monotonous long-distance patrol, far up towards

A CRUISER OF THE NEWCASTLE CLASS IN A TROPICAL PORT: SHE IS ONE OF A CLASS OF FIVE SIMILAR VESSELS; these were formerly known as the Southampton class, until the loss of the latter vessel in January 1941—*Drawing by Montague Dawson*

With the exception of H.M.S. *Liverpool* (which is a vessel of 9,400 tons), all the Newcastles displace 9,100 tons. They are cruisers with a length of 591 ft. and a beam of 64 ft. The armament of each consists of twelve 6-in. guns, eight 4-in. anti-aircraft and twenty-one other weapons. The complement is 700 officers and men. Originally they were known as the Southampton class, but that ship was lost in January 1941, as the result of catching fire after having been in action with German bombing aircraft. All these ships were built during the years 1934 to 1938 as a reply to the Japanese Mogami class: noticeable features of their construction are the raking funnels and masts and the tripod mounting

On left—**A BRITISH CRUISER IN NORTHERN WATERS: H.M.S. "Jamaica," an 8,000-ton vessel of the Mauritius class, under a wintry sky.** This warship is one of our most modern vessels: she is one of nine 8,000-ton ships all of which were completed in the years 1940 and 1942. Each has a length of 549 ft., with a beam of 62 ft.; and each carries three aircraft on board, with one launching catapult. The Mauritius class is armed with twelve 6-in. guns and twenty-four smaller weapons: their speed is 33 knots

the Arctic ice, perhaps, or equally far down in the fringes of the South Polar regions. There are few stretches of water of interest to the British Navy, however remote they may be, in which the enemy can reckon for certain that he will not encounter, at a moment most awkward to himself, the watchful gaze of a cruiser's look-out. It is obvious that the cruiser has to be wary to avoid the special dangers of to-day—the torpedo, the bomb and the mine. The opening days of this war were marked by the brilliant attack upon the German pocket-battleship *Graf Spee*, acting as a raider off the South American coast, by the three British cruisers *Exeter*, *Ajax* and *Achilles*. Mr. Winston Churchill, as First Lord of the Admiralty, commented thus on this action in a broadcast speech:

"The chance of honour came suddenly to the three cruisers engaged in the South Atlantic. We have to go back a long way in history to find any more brilliant and resolute fighting than that of the *Exeter*, *Ajax* and *Achilles*. But if the call had come elsewhere in the oceans or the narrow seas, skill and courage of equal quality would have been forthcoming. Many vexatious tasks lie before the Royal Navy and before its comrades in the Merchant Navy and, as I always warn you, rough and violent times lie ahead, but everything that has happened since the beginning of this war should give the nation confidence that in the end the difficulties will be surmounted. The problems solved, and duty done."

M. C.

STRIKING AT THE JAPS IN THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC

General MacArthur's Forces Seize the Gilbert Islands and Land Upon Bougainville in the Solomons

IN the South Pacific General MacArthur has been almost continually in action against the enemy since last July, gradually forcing Japan to relinquish islands she had won so easily in the early months of 1942. The island group of New Georgia, among the Solomon Islands, was taken during July; Salamaua, Lae and Finschafen, in New Guinea, wrested from the enemy during September; fierce air attacks upon Bougainville, the largest island in the Solomons, and Rabaul, on New Britain, the main base of the Japanese in the South Pacific, occupied the month of October. Kahili, near Buin, on Bougainville, the last important base left to the enemy in the Solomons, was subjected to terrific air bombardment, with forces varying from 100 to 250 planes, aiming at the complete destruction of the Japanese air power in this area.

Then, on November 2, American troops landed on Bougainville at Empress Augusta Bay, on the west coast of the island. It was a land, sea, and air operation, giving the Marines very necessary support, as the Japanese were fully prepared for invasion and were well entrenched with heavily-defended strongposts supported by A.-A. guns, mortars and machine-guns. The Japanese forces on Bougainville were estimated at not less than 40,000 men. The American Marines secured their beach-head, but progress inland was not easy. They took with them thirty trained dogs, Alsatian and Pinscher Doberman, to help them in finding the elusive enemy. Paratroops had also, about this time, dropped upon Choiseul Island, over which they secured control.

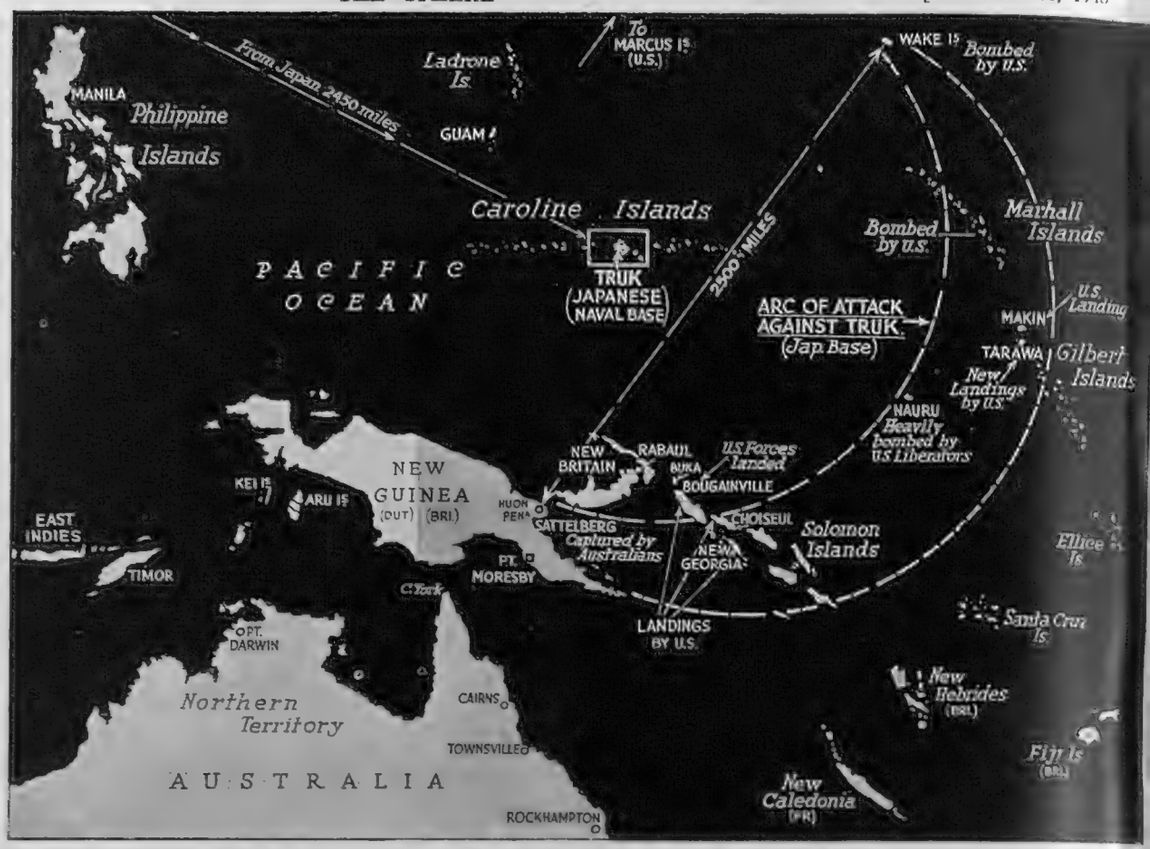
An effort by the Japanese naval forces to prevent the landing on Bougainville was driven off after a short engagement. A serious naval battle took place a few days later, on November 7, when a large naval force was sent out from Truk, the Japanese naval base in the Caroline Islands. Having received information from reconnaissance planes, MacArthur was fully prepared, ready for the enemy when the ships stole along the west coast in the darkness of night. In the battle which took place about 40 miles west of Empress Augusta Bay, three Japanese cruisers and four destroyers were sunk, without loss to the Allies, and the enemy was finally driven off.

But Japan does not easily give up any place she has once occupied, and a daring landing of twenty-one barges laden with troops and supplies was made at Atsinima Bay, at the mouth of the Laruna River, about six miles north of Empress Augusta Bay. They were immediately attacked with the full force of the Allied air power—torpedo-bombers and dive-bombers causing much destruction. It would seem that the enemy is now trapped upon Bougainville, as evacuation would prove very difficult with the Allies holding command of sea and air in the area. Resistance, however, remains strong upon the island.

The great difficulty with which General MacArthur has to contend is the rapid reinforcement in the air which the enemy receives, owing to the convenient island bases dotted on the ocean all the way from Japan. It is said to be possible for as many as 100 planes to arrive every day. Truk, having a direct sea route to Rabaul, out of range for the Allied planes, supplies fresh ships to replace those so constantly destroyed in Rabaul Harbour, and protects the convoys reinforcing New Guinea.

It was with the object of encircling Truk, the mid-Pacific Gibraltar, that General MacArthur attacked the Gilbert Islands, which lie about 1,300 miles to the west, in order to obtain air and sea bases nearer to the main naval force of the enemy. The Gilbert Islands have belonged to Great Britain since 1892, but were seized by Japan a few days after Pearl Harbour. A fierce air bombardment of the Marshall Islands, a group lying to the north of the Gilberts, took place on November 18, to prevent reinforcements being sent to the Gilberts, where a landing was effected on November 20, upon Tarawa and Makin. These are tiny islets but important.

Under cover of strong naval support, the American troops were landed at Tarawa, headed by the Marines, the "Leatherbacks," and followed by the infantry. Fierce fighting took place on the sandy beaches, where there was no cover and the losses on both sides were very heavy. The naval guns pounded the Japanese positions, and planes from aircraft-carriers destroyed oil and munition dumps and raced up and down among the enemy troops. Some of the most desperate fighting has taken place on Betio Island, off Tarawa, where the air base is situated. By November 23, the struggle was nearly over, for Makin Island was captured on that day and Betio Island on the 24th, and two days later it was officially announced that few Japanese were alive on the Gilbert Islands.



THE ARC OF ALLIED ATTACK AGAINST JAPAN IN THE SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC

The news of various landings and air bombardment reaches this country at intervals. If plotted on a map, these various attacks fall within a curved area reaching from New Guinea in the west to Wake Island in the north-east. The chord of this arc measures 2,500 miles. The curved area of attack includes the Solomon group of islands, Nauru Island, Tarawa and Maku atolls, the Marshall Islands and, at the extreme north, Wake Island. Landings and bombings have taken place at many points within this curve. Naval and air conflicts have also occurred from time to time, Japan losing cruisers and destroyers to an extent which she cannot afford with safety

THE U.S. ASSAULT ON BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND: Part of the Allied scheme for pressing back the Japanese advanced bases in the South-West Pacific included the landing upon Bougainville Island, which lies to the east of New Guinea. It is the largest of the Solomon Island group. The landing was made on the beaches of the Empress Augusta Bay, on the west coast of the island. An area round the bay was occupied, and advanced parties then forced their way inland. The Japanese shortly afterwards effected a landing on Atsinima Bay, a few miles to the north of the U.S. beaches. About the same time U.S. planes heavily bombed the Japanese airfield at Kahili, at the southern tip of the island. Choiseul Island was also occupied as part of the general scheme of attack

THE FIRST NURSE ON VELLA LAVELLA: Lieut. Burnette I. Stensen, an Army nurse, reaches the island by plane to take charge of the American soldiers wounded during the occupation of this spot in the Solomons

RABAUL, THE GREAT JAP BASE IN NEW BRITAIN, IS BEING POUNDED UNMERCIFULLY BY THE ALLIED AIR FORCES IN THE PACIFIC. Ever since operations opened in the South-West Pacific, Rabaul has been a focal point of attack: it was from this central base that the lesser Jap bases amongst the islands were re-supplied and re-equipped. For months past it has been subjected to the heaviest of bombing attacks, and its crowded harbour and overstuffed quays have provided good targets for the Allied bombers. In this picture, taken during the great raid by B-25 bombers on November 2, ships and harbour installations are seen blazing along the full length of the waterfront: in the harbour itself ships are sinking and afire; right in the foreground a burning Jap ship is again shaken in every plate by a near miss which tosses a great geyser of water in the air

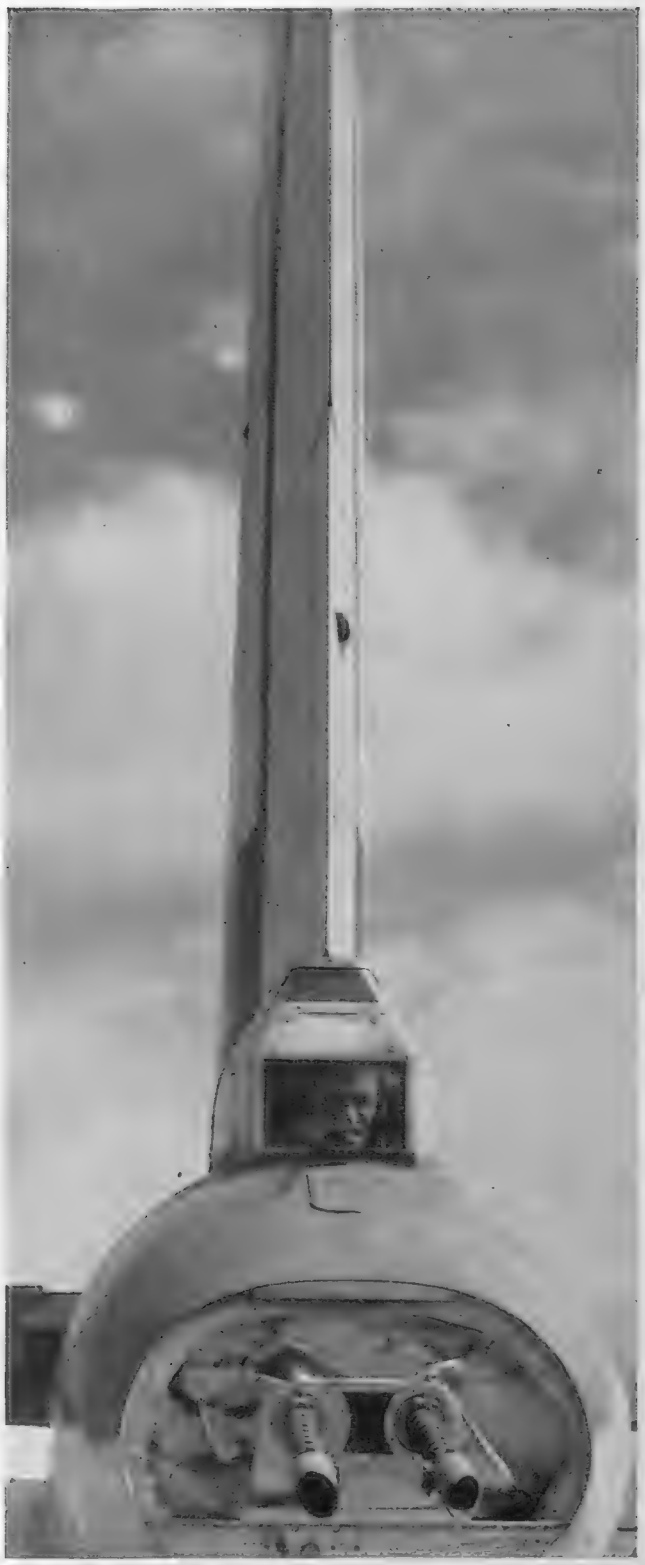
ON THE BEACH AT BOUGAINVILLE DURING THE RECENT LANDINGS: American wounded are being carried from the scene of action in special wire litters to waiting naval craft, which will convey them back to the base. This type of litter was first used in connection with the pack-mule transports employed in New Guinea: it is now in general use by the American forces owing to its greater ease in handling in the jungle, on naval craft and in transport aircraft. Note, also, in this picture, the variety of modern fighting equipment landed on Bougainville Island: General MacArthur landed many tanks and other heavy vehicles and equipment with the obvious intention of speedily gaining control over the Japs—*Drawing by W. G. Whitaker*

The War by Air

THE AIR-GUNNERS OF THE BOMBERS

With Two Special Drawings of Recent Dramatic Rescues at Sea

THE NOSE OF A MARAUDER, fastest medium bomber now operating from Britain. This view shows the rounded compartment in front of the aircraft where the bomb-aimer-navigator sits



AT THE VERY TAIL OF A FLYING FORTRESS: The position taken up by the tail-gunner, under the huge fin. He looks through his own window dead astern, and his guns fire from the compartment which forms the extreme end of the fuselage. This picture was taken at a station where these long-range aircraft are operated by Coastal Command for patrols over the North Atlantic

WHAT A GERMAN CANNON-SHELL LOOKS LIKE. A 20-mm. specimen which was found, unexploded and lodged in the motor of a Thunderbolt fighter, after the great American raid on Bremen on November 26

A CLOSE-UP VIEW OF THE "BOMBAGATOR" (bomb-aimer-navigator) in his seat in the very front of a Marauder: The gunners in a bombing aircraft perform a role which is becoming more and more exacting as the enemy fighters develop their offensive tactics over Germany and occupied Europe. In the pictures on this page, the gunners' positions on Marauder and Flying Fortress are shown. The big picture immediately above shows, not only the gunner's position and the excellent visibility he enjoys behind its glassed-in windows, but also the large calibre shells which his guns discharged from the nose of the Marauder: in this aircraft, the pilot's seat is placed above and behind the gunner

THE THREE MEN WHO CAME DOWN IN THE PACK ICE OFF THE GREENLAND COAST. They were on a flight of 5,600 miles from Britain to British Columbia in a Hampden bomber of Transport Command when they were forced down and took to their rubber dinghy: for twenty hours they hand-clawed a passage fifteen miles through an icefield, between towering icebergs and under a full moon—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

Setting out in a Hampden to the farther side of Canada, three airmen of Transport Command, R.A.F., were forced down when two miles out from Iceland and had to take to their rubber dinghy. For twenty hours they hand-clawed their way along a passage of fifteen miles through an icefield off Greenland, between towering icebergs. Even by brushing a floe the rubber dinghy might be punctured, or gashed, and founder. The dinghy travelled at the rate of a mile every twenty minutes, under a full moon with great luminous bergs on each side. The air was full of great cracklings and the incessant sound of thunder, interspersed with a noise like heavy artillery, as the bergs collided and broke. The men made their way to a great black rock, an island in the icy sea, where they landed. After eleven days of agony in the intense cold, the three airmen were saved by a ship which was making the last passage of the year through those waters

AN AMERICAN CATALINA FLYING-BOAT RESCUING THE CREW OF A FLYING FORTRESS WHICH WAS FORCED DOWN IN THE MEDITERRANEAN. The Fortresses carry two rubber boats: the crew are instructed that, in the event of need, one of these is to be occupied by the pilot and four men, and that the other is to be used by the co-pilot and the other four. The boats are then linked together in the manner shown: should they become separated, however, each should then be self-supporting. Note, in the above drawing, how the two wing-tips of the big rescuing flying-boat have been lowered to form floats as the aircraft touches down on the water—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

FROM THE FIGHTING FRONT IN ITALY

Recent Pictures of Conditions with the Fifth and Eighth Armies

HOW THE RIVER OBSTACLES IN ITALY ARE BEING OVERCOME with the aid of big bulldozing machines. Here one of these indispensable bulldozers is seen working in water to clear the debris of a bridge blown by the Germans, preparatory to making a temporary ford over the Trigno River. By this means essential vehicles will be able to cross over, and later the engineers will probably erect a temporary bridge

TWO BRITISH BRIGADIERS who have just escaped from an Italian prison camp. On left—**Brigadier C. H. Boucher**, captured in the Western Desert on June 7, 1942; and **Brigadier G. F. Johnson**, captured in Tobruk on June 20, 1942. Two British Brigadiers, their batmen and cook, accompanied by two Yugoslav officers, two Arab soldiers and an eighteen-year-old Italian, made a dramatic escape from an Italian prison camp on September 10, 1943. As the Germans approached the camp, the guards cut the wire fencing and the party made a hurried getaway and hid in the hills. For the next six weeks they remained in hiding. Then began the trek towards the Allied lines. At one village they heard German voices, and quickly slipped past a German signal truck tapping out a Morse message. The whole party paid high tribute to the two Brigadiers, who used a telescope in lieu of a compass and developed a remarkable flair for spotting the whereabouts of enemy troops. On November 6 they finally met up with British troops, when this picture was taken

AMERICAN ENGINEERS BUILDING NEW COMMUNICATIONS BEHIND THE FIGHTING LINE. Here they are seen fitting the last section of a pontoon-bridge into place across the Volturno River, to complete another link in the many chains of supply whereby reinforcements and military equipment may quickly reach the advanced fighting forces in the field

ON THE SANGRO FRONT, where an intense programme of "dumping" supplies for the recent push by the Eighth Army was carried out. This picture is typical of many similar scenes on the Torino-Sangro road, where the verges were lined with ammunition for the guns in readiness for the big push

AFTER A SESSION IN THE FIRING LINE: Front-line troops enjoying a concert given by the divisional band during a rest from the sanguinary fighting up in the hilly country on the Fifth Army front

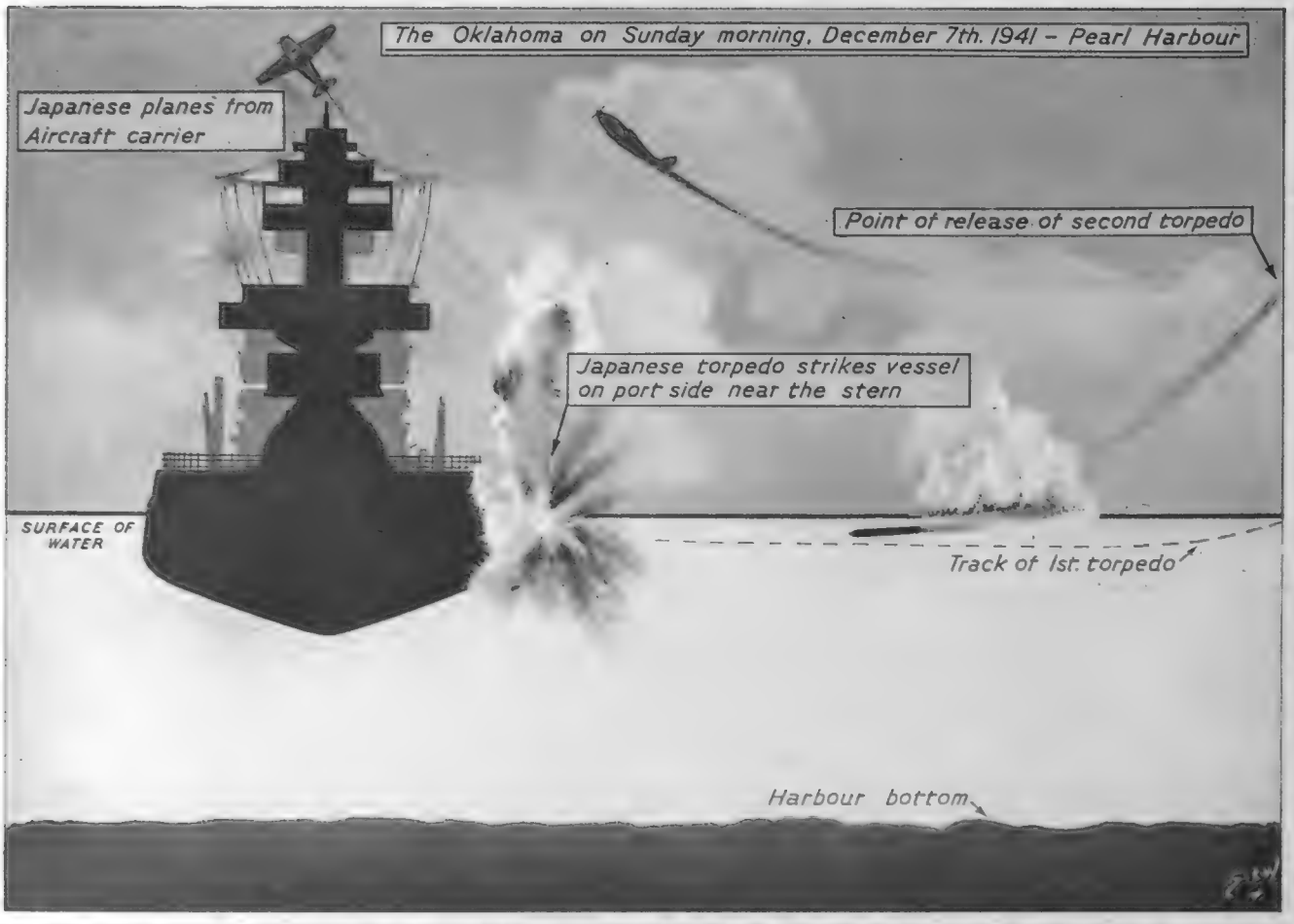
GENERAL EISENHOWER ON A FRONT-LINE TOUR: Rattling through the streets of an Italian village, the Commander-in-Chief encounters some British soldiers moving up in a Bren-gun carrier

THE LONELY DESPATCH-RIDERS OF THE FIFTH ARMY, WHO DAILY FACE MUDDY ROADS AND APPALLING WEATHER CONDITIONS, as well as enemy mortar-bombs and other hazards, in the hilly country of Central Italy as they carry their despatches from the front line to Headquarters—*Drawing by E. Osmond*

The work of the despatch-rider in Italy is not light. He has got to "get through" whatever be the conditions of the road and the weather. What his work has been during the past few weeks can be judged from the narratives of correspondents, who describe the state of the ground (where it is not hard, jagged rock) as being so thick that the men have been working their way forward through mud which reached to their knees, and even, on occasion, to their thighs. The despatch-rider is employed when it is necessary to send detailed papers and official communications which cannot either conveniently or safely be sent by telegraph, telephone or wireless. Detailed instructions which must not leak out can be handed over to an experienced rider with the assurance that, but for some very untoward circumstance, the documents will reach their destination unseen by any curious eyes. The despatch-rider must "get through," but it must be with his sealed case. It is essentially a type of work for the man who prefers to work alone; he does not mind a sudden emergency which calls for a rapid decision. The ideal despatch-rider is of the same mental type as the pilot of a single-seater fighter: he must depend on his own wits if anything goes wrong.

GENERAL EISENHOWER AND GENERAL MARK CLARK MEET: The C.-in-C. and the Commander of the Fifth Army are here seen at Capodochino Airport, when the former paid a visit to the fighting front recently. Despite statements that the Supreme Commander might soon be shifting his headquarters to a spot nearer the fighting zone, General Eisenhower still continues to operate from the City of Algiers in North Africa. Note the four stars on the plane by which General Eisenhower made his trip, denoting the rank of the occupant of the aircraft

AN OBSERVATION POST OF THE 78TH DIVISION ON THE SANGRO: This is perched in an outhouse of a deserted farm high on the south bank. The British troops are keeping watch on German fortified positions on the opposite side, where most of the work is carried out at night



1. HOW THE ATTACK ON THE "OKLAHOMA" WAS CARRIED OUT BY JAPANESE TORPEDO-CARRYING PLANES. The latter had been launched from an aircraft-carrier off Hawaii in the early morning of December 7, 1941. One of them successfully launched a torpedo at the 29,000-ton battleship and this struck her on the port side near the stern. The vessel did not sink, owing to the fact that she was lying in shallow water, but capsized; her superstructure touched the harbour bed, and thus she remained until the salvage experts could begin their work of righting her

How the "OKLAHOMA" was BROUGHT UP at PEARL HARBOUR

An Unusual Salvage Effort Successfully Accomplished by American Engineers

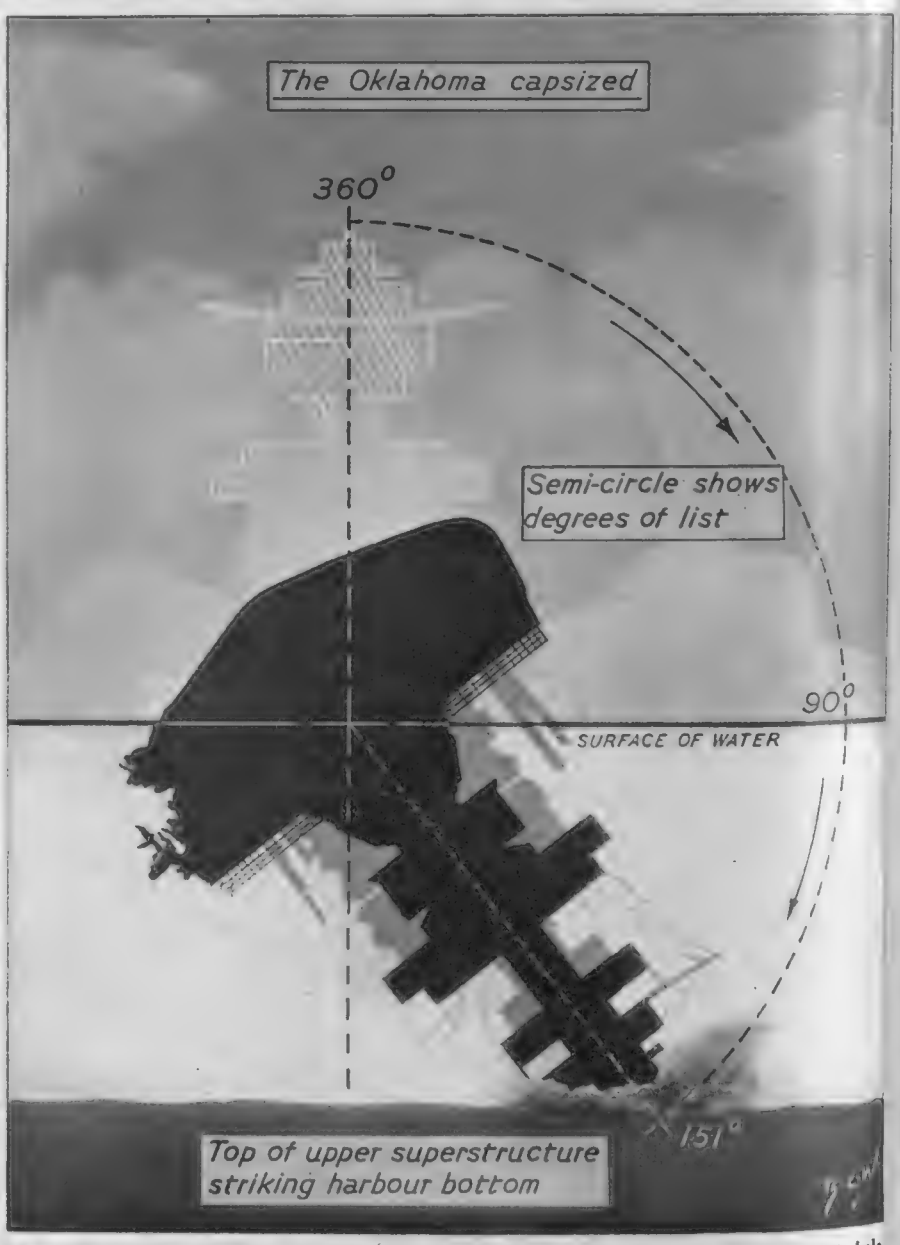
—With Special Drawings by B. C. Wood

ON the fateful Sunday morning of December 7, 1941, when eight battleships of the United States Fleet were sunk by Japanese airborne torpedoes, there was a scene in Pearl Harbour to appal the stoutest heart. Great volumes of smoke and steam poured from the stricken vessels; amid the rolling masses of smoke could be seen the upper works of the great battleship *Oklahoma*, with the vessel already beginning to show a list to port. She was struck on this side of her hull near the stern and received material damage.

When the fury of the attack died away, it was found that the battleship had capsized; she had turned over through an angle of 151 degrees. Her masts, funnels, big turrets and the whole of her upper superstructure had vanished from sight. The serious damage on the port side, near the stern, might explain why she had not turned through 180 degrees, the transverse symmetry of the vessel having been destroyed; but, as indicated by the character of one

THE SCENE IN PEARL HARBOUR AFTER THE JAP ATTACK: This picture was taken on December 7, 1941: it will be seen that the "Oklahoma" is belching steam and smoke, and she is already showing a list to port. The battleship in the foreground is the "Maryland": she was only slightly damaged

THE BATTLESHIP NEARLY ON AN EVEN KEEL: The salvage operations are now drawing towards a close: the "Oklahoma's" heavy superstructure has all disappeared, cut away under water to help in the work of bringing the battleship up through 151 degrees



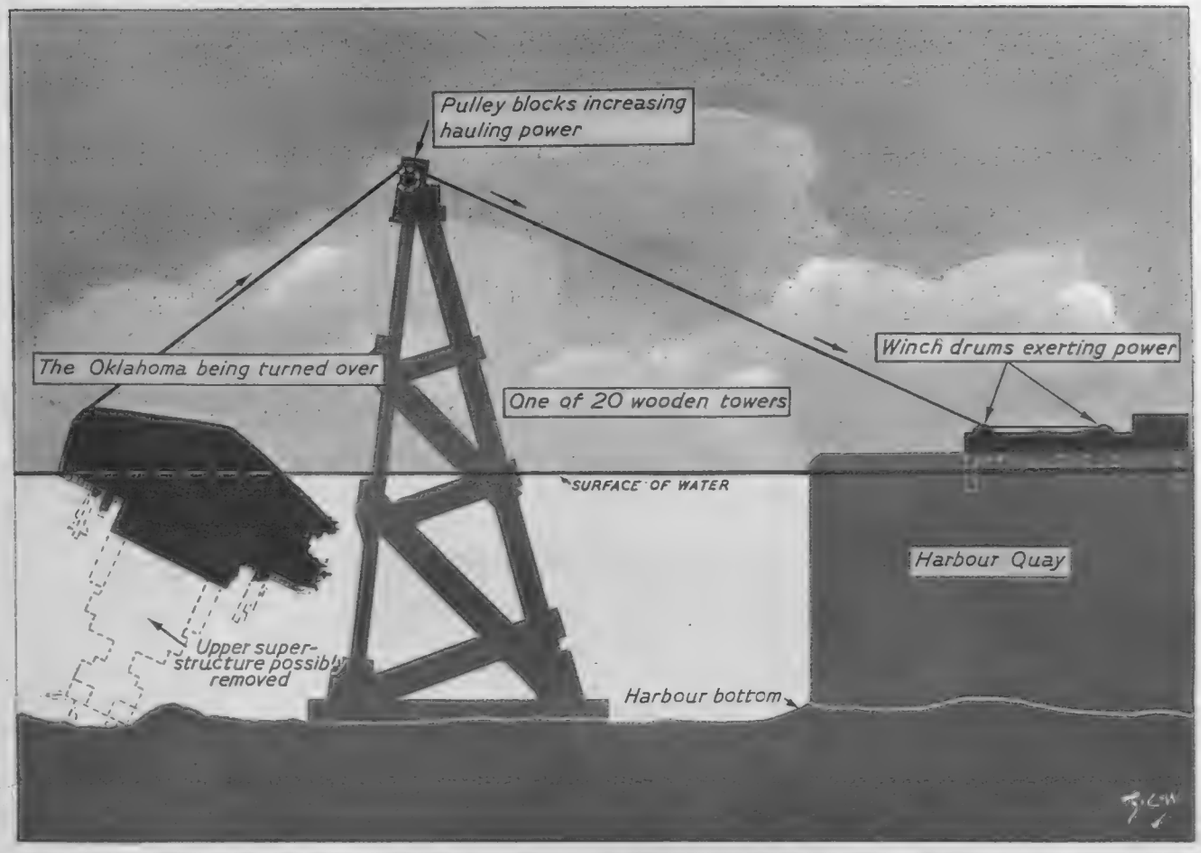
2. THE "OKLAHOMA" AS SHE CAME TO REST UPSIDE DOWN. With a great hole torn in her stern by the Jap torpedo, the vessel's upper works, touching the harbour bed, caused the battleship to lie on the bottom at an angle of 151 degrees—but she did not sink, and at all times her hull remained visible above the water

phase of the salvage operations, the water below her was very shallow, and her topmost structure had, it seems, fetched up against the harbour bottom.

The salvage problem was, mainly, one of rotating the ship, and it seems that it involved some lifting effort as well as a turning effort. Further, it was desirable to effect the turning effort by a pull on an upward slant of the wire ropes it was proposed to use, making it possible to attach them at points on the superstructure as far from the centre line of the hull as possible, thus obtaining a greater leverage.

In order to obtain this lifting and turning power, twenty stoutly built wooden towers were erected on the harbour bottom, as close along the starboard side of the ship as the rake of the tower members would allow. It is this forest of towers which is shown in the photograph reproduced here. The wire ropes already referred to were passed over the heads of these towers. They were placed in units of four ropes, each over its own pulley, the total pull being, therefore, a very powerful one.

It may be explained that without these towers, which provided a raising as well as a rotating pull, the wire ropes strained over the rising curve of the hull would have started a downward force upon it, for it was impracticable to attach the ends of the ropes to the part of the hull which was uppermost when the



3. HOW THE TWENTY PIERS WERE ERECTED FOR THE SALVAGE OF THE BATTLESHIP. The great towers were constructed of wood and were erected all along the length of the ship between it and the quayside. Cables were then fixed to the side of the deck farthest from the quay and hauled in by great winch-drums, as shown in the drawing

A photographic impression of the manner in which the twenty huge timber towers were erected alongside the "Oklahoma." The wire ropes which hauled her up ran over the tops of the towers and were attached to winches on the shore. For the last stages of the work the towers were removed

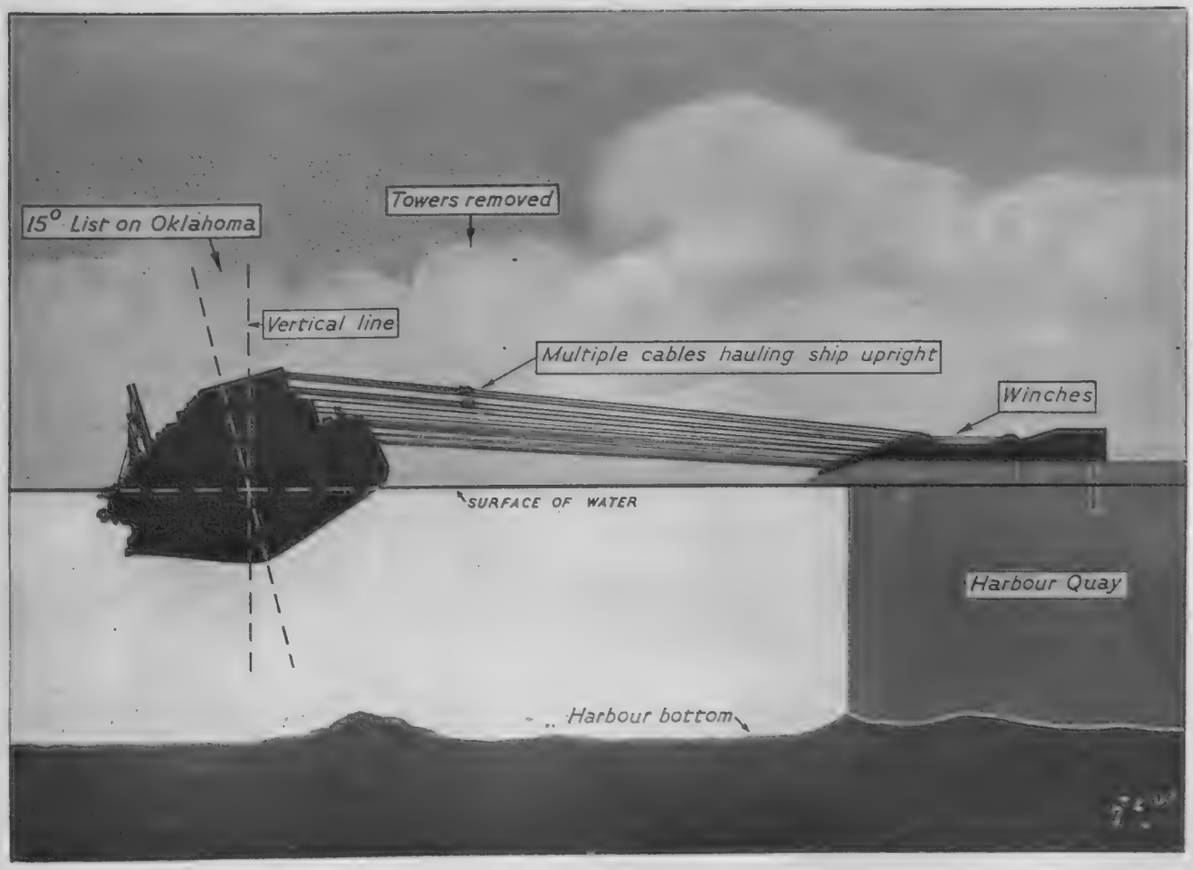
ship lay turned over through 151 degrees.

At some stage the greater part of the superstructure was removed, but just when has not been reported. In this connection, it may be pointed out that steelwork can be removed under water by flame-cutters and pneumatic drills and chisels of special design, and also with the aid of explosives. In any case, most of the superstructure had been removed before the second phase of the operations; one stage of this, when the angle of list had been reduced to 15 degrees, is shown in one of the drawings given here.

The cables in this latter stage were attached at various points of the ship, presumably as far from the centre line as practicable,

so that the maximum leverage could be obtained. These attached cables led back to a big pulley-block, through which the drum-cables, working from the quay, exerted their force. In both stages of the operation, the winches were placed well back on the quayside. In such operations, the pull transmitted by a ½-in. wire rope may be as much as five tons; by a ¾-in. rope, twelve tons.

In hauling operations of this kind, use is made of gearing and the four-sheaved or wheeled pulley-blocks. By this means an accumulation of force is exerted on the hauling point, and in spite of the huge dead weight, it was possible to raise and turn the *Oklahoma*.



4. THE LATTER STAGES OF THE SALVAGE OPERATION. The vessel has now only a list of 15 degrees. The twenty wooden towers have been removed, and the cables are hauling direct from the winches through pulleys

THE HOTEL SPLENDID WEATHERS THE STORM

The Present Boom in the Hotel Industry and how it has been Brought About Described by CHARLES GRAVES

EVERY Londoner and visitor to London realises that the hotels are enjoying the greatest boom in their history. At many of them it is necessary to book rooms ten days ahead, particularly in mid-week. The restaurants of the hotels are crowded, and so are the bars. Drinks have doubled or trebled—a 1s. 6d. cocktail costing anything from 3s. 6d. to 4s. 6d., and a bottle of champagne anything from £3 15s. to £6. What is more, the austerity meals ordained by Lord Woolton mean that the guest can have only one main dish in a three-course meal, compared with fifty varieties in peacetime. Hotels, too, have increased the price of their bedrooms considerably, and they are no longer spending large sums of money in advertising, or on reception officials who meet visitors from the United States at the various ports.

Thanks to the Ministry of Labour, the staff at every hotel has been drastically reduced, and, as most people know, waiters are paid out of the *tronc*, and so they are not affected by the general rise in wages.

This last year the Savoy Group showed a net trading profit of £225,000, while Grosvenor House showed a similar profit of somewhere around £140,000. During this last few months, the popularity of hotels in London has increased still further. The hotel companies have been trying to fight a Government scheme to set aside still more bedrooms for American officers in London. In some cases as much as 75 per cent. of the accommodation has to be reserved for them. And American officers (like the men) are known to be good spenders.

On the face of it, the prices of hotel shares on the Stock Exchange are astonishingly low. It is true that the £1 Savoy Group shares stand at a guinea. But the other £1 hotel shares range from 5s. to 14s. or so, and even this is a rise, for the shares of one hotel group were changing hands at 3d. only a year ago, while even the Savoy shares had dropped to 6s. or less.

What is the explanation for the Stock Exchange's cautious attitude towards hotel shares? There are several reasons. To begin with, the hotel industry in London had four thoroughly bad years from 1937 to 1941. It began with the Munich crisis, when the wealthy American clients returned hastily to the United States, and continued until several months after the famous blitz of May 10, 1941. So, to start with, the hotels have many thousands of pounds to get back to compensate themselves for the four lean years.

Secondly, there is always the danger of a renewal of the air raids. So far, the Great Eight hotels have been very lucky. Only the Carlton was badly hit. Thirdly, comes the question of replacements, and this is perhaps the gravest aspect of all During the past few days you may have noticed that brandy fetched 98s. a bottle, whisky 72s., and champagne 70s. at a Glasgow auction. One buyer took 380 bottles of vintage port at £2 a bottle. The cheapest wine was a mystery burgundy; unlabelled, and put up in claret bottles. The auctioneer had said that he did not really know what it was. Nevertheless, it fetched 18s. a bottle.

Buying wines on a rising market is one form of replacement. Far more expensive are such things as carpets, upholstery, and redecoration generally. I have been shown the secret estimates of what we might call Grand Hotel X. The estimate for carpets alone is £35,750. The estimate for linen is no less than £52,000. New upholstery will cost £20,000, and as no redecorations could be done over the past four years, a sum of £44,000 would be required for this. New silver will cost £4,000; crockery and glass another £8,000. These sums will doubtless be spread over a period of two or three years. But the renovation of the boilers and lifts will have to be carried out immediately. And this sum alone is £60,000.

In the meantime, the cost of staff wages and food, despite the staff's drastic reduction, is £163,000 per annum compared with £159,000 in peacetime. (Many people forget how many unseen servants, like cooks and dish-washers, are required by a luxury hotel.) The dish-washers are not as good as they were in peacetime, when the annual breakage bill for china and glass was over £2,000 a year. To-day this sum can be safely doubled.

The cost of bands depends on the number of instrumentalists. This has gone up by 25 per cent., and an average first-class hotel orchestra costs £200 a week. Though far fewer flowers are seen on the tables and in the foyers of an hotel, the annual flower bill at the Grand Hotel X is £4,400 compared with £3,800 in 1939.

Other drops in income occur in the case of all those glass showcases which were rented out to jewellers, milliners and others at anything from £250 to £500 a year. The majority of these have disappeared. Luxury hotels which in peacetime drew a considerable rent from the small luxury shops on the ground floor of their premises have had to reduce their annual charge. Much worse than these minor items is the almost total disappearance of the banqueting business. The Grand Hotel X had £150,000 worth of orders for these banquets cancelled between September 3 and September 10, 1939. The latest blow to fall on it is that the Government have commandeered an assembly room (for the lack of a better word) which in peacetime took £114,000 a year. And so far, no price has been mentioned for the requisitioning.

"All very true," you may say, "but what about these austerity meals and the charge of 8s. 6d. for luncheon and 13s. 6d. for dinner, when there is so little to eat and so little variety?" The answer surprised even me when I saw all the kitchen figures of the Grand Hotel X over the past five years. These proved without any doubt that in spite of the difference in the amount and quality of the food, the hotel is only taking a few pounds a day more than it did in peacetime out of its meals. I would like to give the exact sum. But, small as the increase is, the authorities might try to reduce the house-charge if they knew it.

Every housewife knows that the only cheap edible to-day is meat. But the hotels are only allowed to buy one pennyworth per guest on their peacetime figures. This means that, like everyone else, they have to spend more money on vegetables, which, in the case of tomatoes, have risen to 1s. 5d. lb. from 6d. lb. (when bought in bulk). Lettuces, spinach—in fact, every vegetable—has doubled or trebled in price; fish prices have risen high; and in order to provide anything approaching a square meal for the clientele, it is often necessary to supply luxury foods like grouse, partridge, chicken, salmon or pheasant at literally uneconomic prices—which is one reason why so little extra money is made out of the austerity meals in spite of the house-charges.

Sceptics may point out that the hotels save large sums of money a year owing to the compulsory reduction of electric light as ordered by the Minister of Fuel. They would be wrong. At the Grand Hotel X, 1,200 tons of coal, 6,000,000 cubic feet of gas, and 1,000,000 units of electricity have been saved in the past twelve months. And yet the bill for heat and lighting is £2,250 more than in peacetime.

Again you may say: "Ah, yes, but look at the saving in having no cabaret." The short answer to this is that when an hotel put on a cabaret, it charged a guinea for dinner; and the peculiar fact emerged that the more expensive the cabaret, the more profit there was out of a guinea, because of the increased numbers of guests and the increased sale of wine, particularly champagne. To-day, there is little profit in champagne simply because there is little champagne.

It may also be suggested that many hotels have increased the price of their old stocks of liquor out of all proportion to their original cost. This is perfectly true in the case of those hotels which still have stocks of pre-war liquor. Several of them, however, had almost their entire cellars destroyed in the blitz on the City of London. And all of them have bought in a rising market.

To sum up, therefore, the position is that the present boom is mostly on paper. The hotel companies have to make as much money as they can as fast as possible; to catch up with their arrears; and to provide huge sums of money with which to redecorate themselves, buy anything from tablecloths to armchairs, and generally to overcome the genteel shabbiness induced by four years of war. Most of them, no doubt, have already set aside sums of money for this purpose. But with everything costing twice what it did before the war, together with the purchase tax ranging from 33⅓ per cent. to 66⅔ per cent., these sums will need to be very large indeed.

A SEAMEN'S MESS-DECK IN ONE OF THE "WOODEN WALLS OF ENGLAND." As a contrast to the scenes being enacted nightly in the big luxury hotels of Britain, is this scene taken on board a minesweeper at sea at dinner-time: the folding bunks in this mess-room are described as "a great improvement over the old trawler standard of comfort." A recent message of congratulation from the Cabinet to the officers and men of the mine-sweeping forces has focused attention upon this less spectacular, but none the less vital, branch of the Royal Navy: they have disposed of enemy mines which would have been sufficient to have destroyed the British Merchant Fleet several times over. For obvious reasons, a ship of wooden construction was called for when dealing with the magnetic mines of the Germans: a new type of minesweeper was, therefore, specially designed by the Admiralty to replace the trawlers and other fishing-craft used in the earlier days of the war

OFFICERS OF THE FUTURE AT LUNCH WITH THEIR EXAMINERS: The Army's great need of officers enables the ordinary ranker with the required qualities to take up a commission. After the men have been selected, they spend three days at a War Office Selection Board, where they live as officers and are identified by a number worn on their arm. The various tests which the men have to undergo are designed to show whether they are of the right type and whether they have the quality of leadership

The Shaftesbury Homes and "Arethusa" Training Ship

The Committee continue to receive news of old *Arethusa* boys attaining Warrant Rank. It is most pleasing to see the boys stepping up and up the rungs of the ladder called Success. Please send a donation to this national work. Address: 164, Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.C.2.

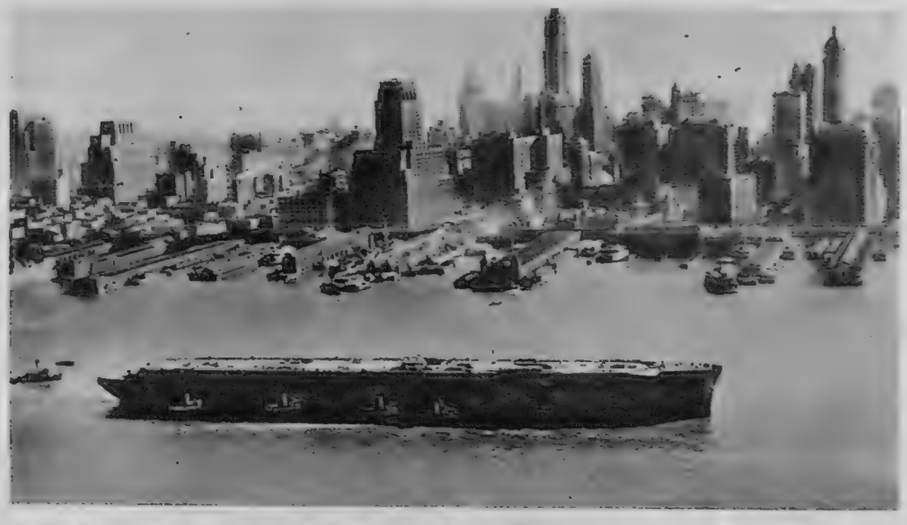
The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this publication should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export

WE NOW HAVE A SPITFIRE BOMBER supporting the Eighth Army on the Sangro front. Four-cannon Spitfire fighters are now operating in Italy as bombers: they each carry a 250-lb. bomb, and are making decisive attacks on enemy positions in the Eighth Army area. In the picture above the bomb is seen in position under the fuselage of an aircraft on its way to the front. These fighter-bombers are being operated by the South African Air Force

FOUR-CANNON SPITFIRE BOMBERS of the South African Air Force on their way to bomb enemy positions over the Sangro River battlefront area in Italy

LATE NEWS PICTURES from ALLIED and ENEMY COUNTRIES

BOMBERS MOUNT 3-IN. GUNS: An American secret just revealed. The U.S. War Department have announced that B-25 Mitchell bombers are now being equipped with 75-mm. (3-in.) cannon—the equivalent of a powerful field gun. This is probably the most sensational advance in aircraft armament announced since the war began. This radio picture from America shows how the gun is mounted in the front of the fuselage below the normal machine-guns



THE "NORMANDIE" EN ROUTE TO HER DRY-DOCK. Convoyed by a flotilla of tugs, the former French luxury liner passes the skyscrapers at the lower end of Manhattan after leaving the North River pier in New York City. Renamed the U.S.S. "Lafayette," she is to be refitted for naval service as a transport at an estimated cost of £5,000,000

GÖRING COMFORTS THE BOMBED BERLINERS. Just received in London from a neutral source, this picture shows Reichsmarshal Hermann Göring in the midst of a crowd of Berliners after a recent raid by British heavy bombers on the German capital

HEALING BERLIN'S BOMB WOUNDS—WITH MUSIC. This picture, the first to reach London in connection with the recent great R.A.F. raids on Berlin, shows a German military band marching up Unter den Linden after the streets had been cleared of debris, in order to help the morale of the citizens. A typical German effort has been made to hide the bomb damage, for the picture shows little. The ruins of one building, however, can be seen (left), while all the windows of the buildings in the background have been shattered. Persons who know Berlin say that the picture apparently was taken at the corner of Unter den Linden and Friedrichstrasse, with the Kranzler Coffee House, familiar to all tourists, on the corner

The World of Books—By Vernon Fane

NEW NOVELS OF COMPELLING INTEREST

A Gripping Murder Story by Joseph Shearing; "Back Room" Scientists; Family Characterisation by Miss Barbara Goolden; An Englishman in South America; A Vivid Historical Novel

WHAT an extraordinarily good craftsman Mr. Joseph Shearing is, and how confidently—and eagerly—one opens each of his new books, each imaginative reconstruction of a crime that happened once, and of which this may be the truest explanation of all. His new book is also, I think, his best. AIRING IN A CLOSED CARRIAGE (Hutchinson. 9s. 6d.) is Victorian melodrama, but melodrama in many respects as it was lived, since the book is based on a celebrated murder case in England in 1889.

The carriage is closed, and it is also stuffy and somewhat evil-smelling, but the ride is exciting and terrible. Briefly, the story is of May, an innocent and unworldly American girl educated in a convent in Paris and later married to a coarse and vulgar Victorian cotton merchant, who takes her off to his ugly Manchester home. After eight years she realises her marriage is a failure. John's brother, Richard, a man of similar stamp, who has always coveted May for himself, urges her to get a divorce. She listens to him only after he reveals that for years John has been keeping a mistress.

May goes to London, ostensibly to stay with friends, but actually to discuss the divorce with Richard, and accidentally encounters Jeremy Thorne, a Manchester admirer of unsavoury reputation. Their meeting is quite innocent, however, and shortly afterwards May hurries home because John is ill. During John's illness Richard makes love to her, but when she rebuffs him and when he hears that she and Jeremy are lovers, his love for May turns to hate. It is he who, when John dies, fakes evidence that May murdered him.

The dramatic suspense throughout this is remarkable. Every psychological motive, every fact and situation clicks into place with the slow, deliberate mechanism of a time-bomb. Every characterisation is strong, grim and sharply defined. It is great stuff.

THE SMALL BACK ROOM (Collins. 8s. 6d.) of Mr. Nigel Balchin's title is a laboratory-cum-office in one of the more obscure, but none the less important, Government departments. This writer, who has shown us before with considerable clarity and wit that he knows something of the Civil Service, both temporary and permanent, here deals with another branch of it, but with the same mixture of brilliant ability, obtuseness, place-seeking, self-sacrifice, elaboration and loyalty.

Sammy Rice, whose book this mainly is, is a research scientist working in that back room where, with a small team of men, he is engaged in inventing, testing and making the instruments of war available to one of the fighting Services. He is a man of medium height, medium looks and a great deal more than medium ability. He is also a fighter, and his life consists of two struggles, both constant and both almost insoluble.

IS THIS TO BE THE AIR BUS OF THE FUTURE? It is a model of a fourteen-passenger helicopter omnibus, and was used by the Greyhound Bus Lines when that corporation applied for permission to operate local air services over 49,130 miles of routes at a recent hearing before the Civil Aeronautics Board in the United States. This bus was designed by the Greyhound Company in collaboration with Igor Sikorsky, the famous helicopter designer

The first could be described as a daily battle to make the work on which he and his colleagues are engaged of use to the war effort rather than a dead-end of technology, or a means to honours and promotions. The second is his equally constant struggle with himself, against the mentally warping effects of a physical deformity—the loss of a foot—which seems to complicate all his relationships.

Sammy's lovely, sensible and devoted Susan, a secretary in the same department, is a very real creation; so is her chief, the egregious Waring, who is ambition personified, and Taylor, the quiet little sergeant who loves working on time-fuses, and Pinker, who had "done damn all in this war except to arrange to get fourteen incompetent nit-wits flung out of important jobs."

It is, emphatically, a book to be read, and it contains a sustained piece of action-writing near the end which, for sheer excitement, would beat most thrillers hollow.

SWINGS AND ROUNDABOUTS (Heinemann. 8s. 6d.) is a quiet English domestic novel about a London family from the beginning of this century to the present day, told with considerable restraint and humanity and, unfortunately, all a little bit dull.

It is a novelist's *tour de force*, one knows, to choose a completely unremarkable subject and to make entertaining, or at least vivid, material out of it. It has been done; on the surface Emma Bovary had nothing to distinguish her from a thousand other provincial women. But it is a risky business, in which there is an ever-present danger of the writing being, as it were, infected by the ordinariness and supernormality of the theme that has been chosen. Where that happens, the result is an unaccidented plane that approaches very close to monotony.

Miss Barbara Goolden's novel misses that charge of monotony by something more than the skin of its teeth, but is still excessively sober in colour. It is the story of two brothers, the sons of a London solicitor. Edwin is prudent, hard-working and sensitive; Bannister, the younger, is gay, unreliable and self-centred. Their careers at school are exactly what one would expect from two such different characters, and they are respectively dissatisfied and happy. Later, when their father dies and they find that there is little money left, Edwin has to join the Civil Service instead of reading for the Bar, and Bannister becomes a bank clerk. Edwin marries the daughter of his old schoolmaster, and the marriage turns out to be successful, though dull. Bannister, on the other hand, marries in a great hurry in 1914, his wife takes scarcely more time to be unfaithful to him, and he divorces her. When he remarries some years later, he takes a job in an hotel in the South of France, but quickly tires of it and returns to London.

Edwin, in the meantime, having saved or made enough money, leaves the Home Office to read for the Bar. At the time of the change-over from one profession to another, he writes a book, and it is through this work that he discovers his own real vocation: to be a clergyman. I think it is this latter part of the book that I liked most. Edwin as a clergyman is very well drawn indeed, without irony, without sentiment and very effectively.

There are no half-measures to Mr. Tom Clarke's reactions to South America. "I fell for the people," he says. "I fell for this continent of colour and grace and majestic scenery. I loved all South America." THE WORD OF AN ENGLISHMAN (Hutchinson. 15s.) is his account of a nine-months visit there, from the autumn of 1941 to the summer of 1942, and it is lively, entertaining and informative about what Mr. Clarke found in Chile, Peru, Uruguay, Brazil and Argentina.

On his way over, travelling in convoy in a Dutch cargo steamer, Mr. Clarke was "warned" about South America by fellow-passengers: "About the wicked women on the waterfronts, the rough houses in the Barbary Coast tradition, the 'revolutions' and briberies and shooting-ups." In his own words, he soon learned how unfairly these travellers' tales misrepresented the picture of the continent as it is to-day. Certainly the writer gives another picture.

It is a book of personalities; even institutions and organisations are described nine times out of ten by writing of the man or woman who runs them, but the author has such an impetuously friendly way with him that one's critical sense takes, as the Americans say, quite a beating. So much easier to go along with Tom Clarke, enjoying yourself with him, being enthusiastic with him over night-clubs, and political processions, and food and fellow journalists. The pace of his days there must have been tremendous, and the pace of his telling matches it.

A VERY SMART TURN-OUT AT THE ELEPHANT AND CASTLE. Bus-drivers, traffic policemen and pedestrians alike thought they were "seeing things" when this miniature hansom cab came bowling along the main road at the Elephant and Castle a few days ago. With the pony, it was a gift for six-year-old Master Leonard Eaton from his father, a well-known Plaistow horse-dealer. The outfit cost 80 guineas

To revert to one of these enthusiasms, I was amused to see him quote those lines of Humbert Wolfe's:

> "You cannot hope to bribe or twist
> The honest British journalist.
> But seeing what the man will do
> Unbribed . . .
> There 's no occasion to."

The romantic story of Sarah Churchill, the great Sarah, Viceroy Sarah, Queen Anne's friend and, above all, wife of John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, is the subject of a new novel, SARAH (Selwyn and Blount. 8s. 6d.), by Miss Winifred Carter. The theme itself is so rich, and so particularly well documented, that no transcription of it, however bald, could fail to have its value, and Miss Carter brings a good deal of zest to her task in addition. But there is a curious triviality in the tone of her writing that does not accord with either the life or character of the woman about whom she is writing; nor, indeed, with the frequently quoted letters from Sarah, from John or from Queen Anne herself.

Sarah's faults and Sarah's virtues were equally in the grand manner; her life was ordered by passionate ambition and by passionate loyalties. She thought and planned in regal terms, and it was no surprise when, in her eighty-fourth year, she suggested that a wax effigy of herself should be made and decorated with jewels, to be placed in the Abbey after her death—a privilege reserved for royalty. There was, one could confidently add, nothing cosy about the Duchess of Marlborough, yet here is a writer who gets dangerously near to such an interpretation of her.

What appeals to one most in this book is the occasional glimpse of domestic life, the making of sugar-plums and marchpane, and of hog's pudding (in which young Sarah Churchill refused to help), and the anecdotes about the lesser figures in the lives of the great. The Duke of Marlborough's father was one Sir Winston Churchill, "pugnacious and dictatorial," and a great favourite with his daughter-in-law, with whom he used to argue interminably on everything from politics to the cut of a riding habit. "As they rode together he would thunder forth his ideas, and he never tired of expounding his sacred doctrine of utter loyalty to the Throne."

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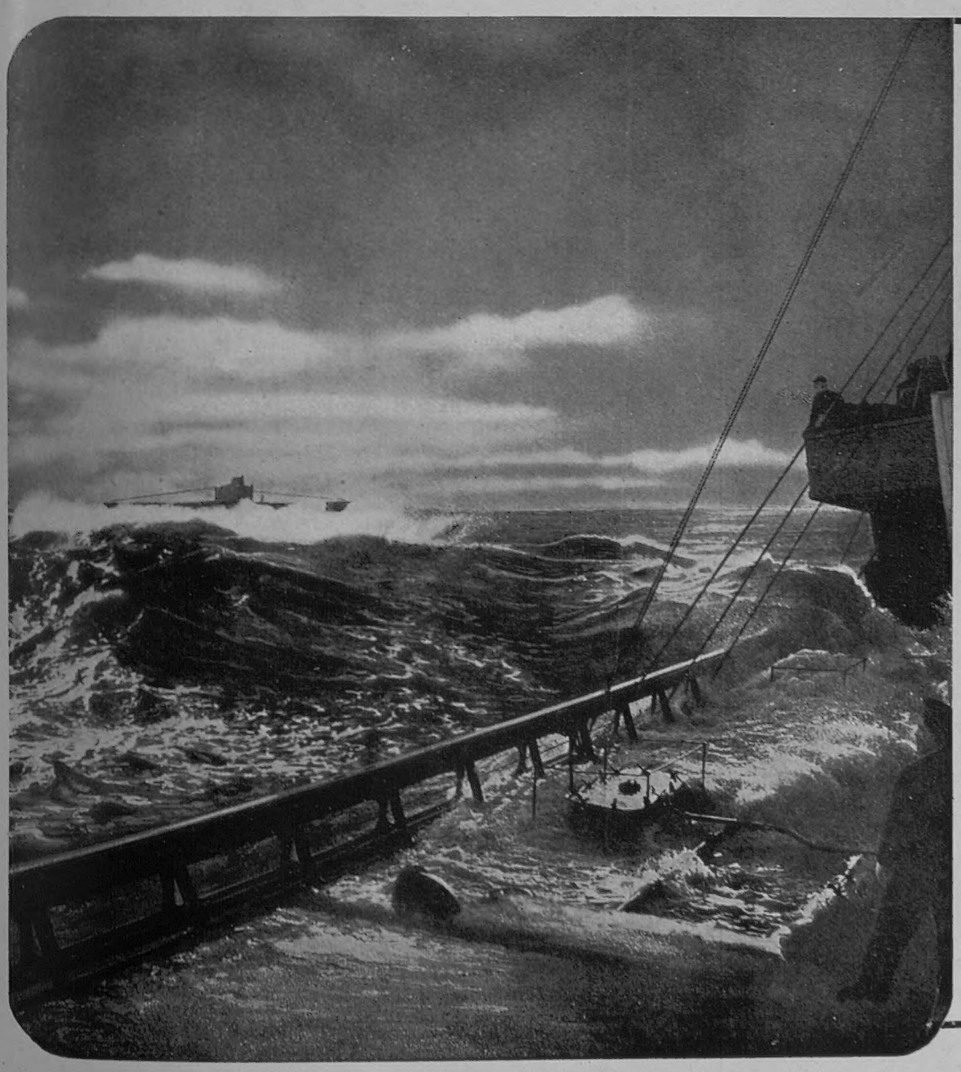

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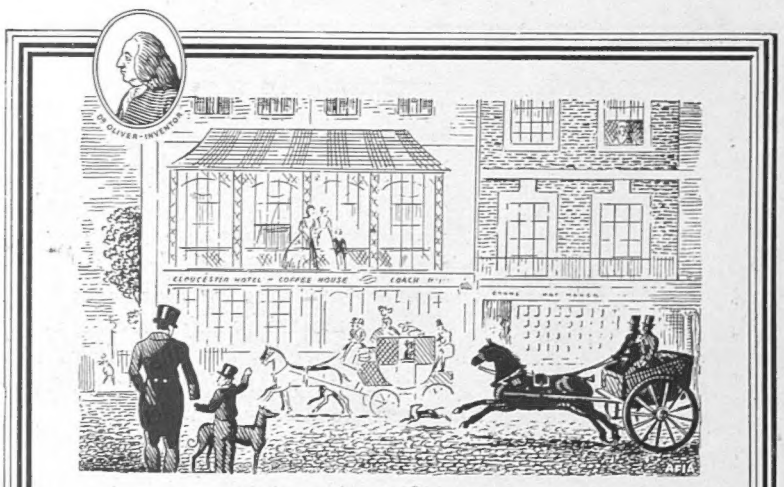

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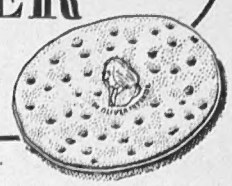

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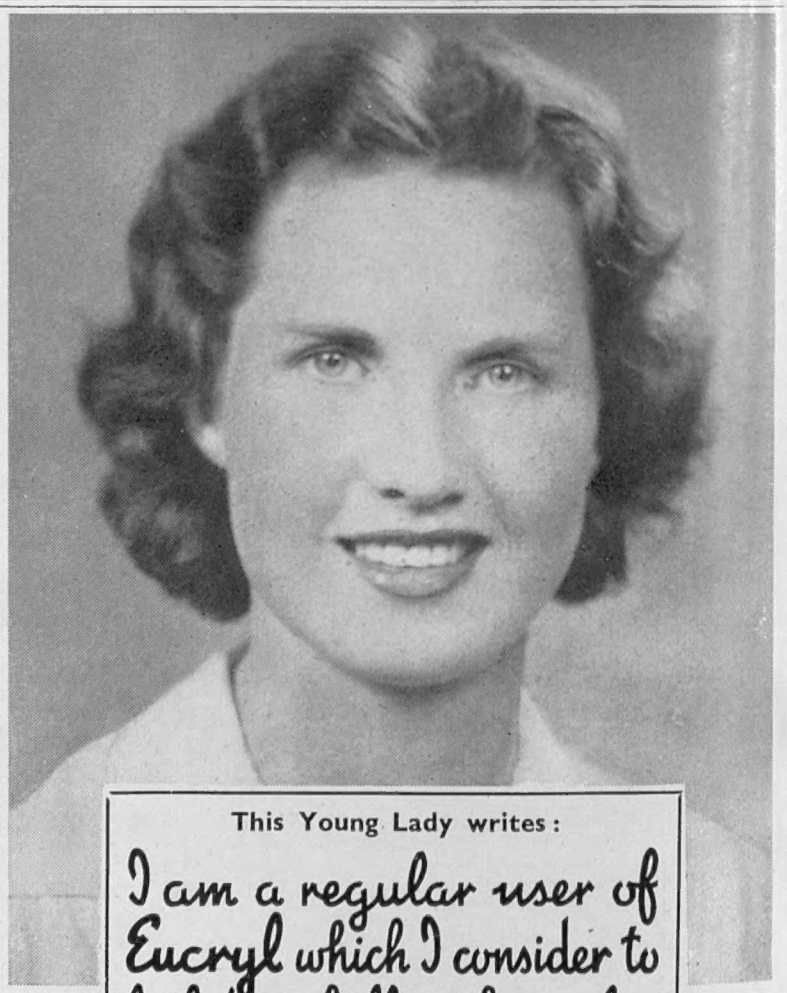

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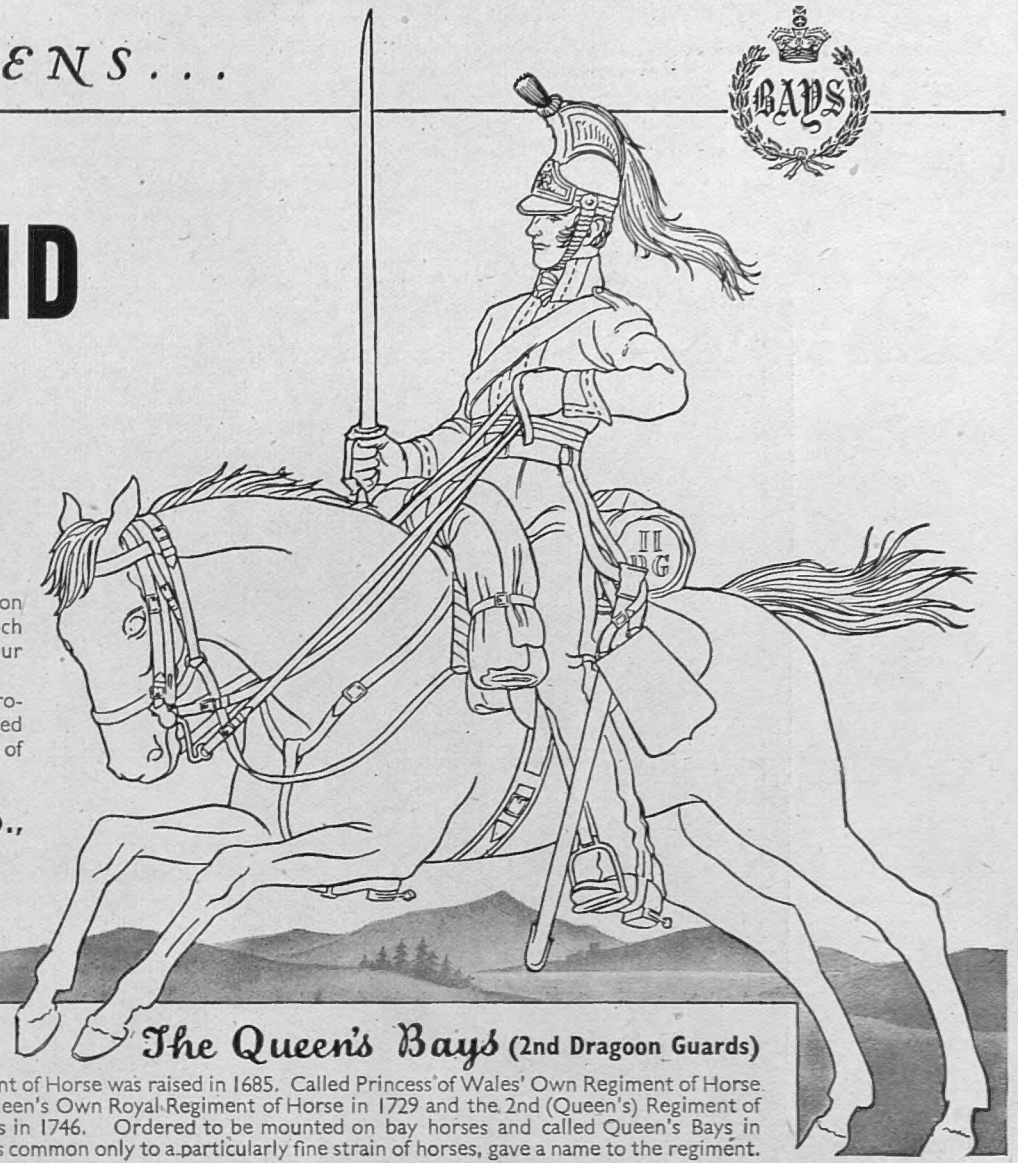

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